THE ADVENTURES OF EMMERA, OR THE FAIR AMERICAN.

VOL. I.

THE ADVENTURES OF EMMERA, OR THE FAIR AMERICAN.

EXEMPLIFYING

The Peculiar Advantages of Society and Retirement.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LETTER I.

Sir PHILIP CHETWYN to Colonel FORRESTER.

OH my friend Charles! What an adventure! Have I croſs'd the ſeas for this! To diſcover the richeſt gem which nature has given to this new world. Paint to yourſelf every bewitching charm the warmeſt imagination can conceive of what is lovelineſs itſelf. The moſt conſummate beauty—the moſt heavenly expreſſion—a ſoftneſs inexpreſſibly ſweet with grace!—Nature! by heaven in her happieſt moment, for once formed divine perfection. Think not I rave, but ſhe is the divinity of theſe wild regions! By my ſoul, ſhe's more than mortal! and I adore her.—

Really, Charles, I can write no more—you muſt expect no account—I am unable to give it—Entranc'd—All emotion!—wild as the winds—Methinks ſhe ſails through cryſtal lakes—or walks through emerald groves—Now floating on the wings of kiſſing air, thro' dazzling worlds, receiving homage as ſhe moves! The queen of Beauty's empire ſtept for a moment from her diſtant throne to play the tyrant in this nether world! To fill our ſouls with hapleſs love, and by the magic of her enchanting eye change us to gazing maniacs, wildly wandering—ſighing—loving—no—not deſpairing.—There—there, Charles—a daſh through the whole, you need not read it.—Now don't quote the *una littura poteſt*.—But no more—let my fancy but for one moment gaze at that ſweet image of more than human tenderneſs, and, alas, I am again undone—my brain will turn the next.

Your hapleſs friend,

P. CHETWYN.

LETTER II.

Miſs CHETWYN to Miſs HERVEY.

I FIND, my dear Kitty, that you are ſurprized I do not more lament my baniſhment, as you call it, to this country of trees and beaſts. Lamenting would be of but little conſequence; here I am—and here for ſome time I muſt remain; and I aſſure you I don't find it ſo horrible as you think it, nor as I expected it. My father is exceedingly tender and obliging to me; and my brother, when he is with us, omits nothing to entertain me. I read and write, and walk, and angle (better fiſhing than ever you ſaw in England) and ſpend much of my time at my harpſichord; I was a little unhappy 'till my father procured me one from Philadelphia: In ſhort, my ſituation is not at all wretched, and uſe will entirely reconcile me to the want of company. As to the Jones's, they are very good ſort of people, but neither the ſons nor daughters have any thing in

them to render their converſation the leaſt agreeable. The father is a worthy-hearted creature, very obliging, is generally chearful, and in his way not unentertaining. He has taken a moſt extenſive plantation, and is at a vaſt expence in getting it in order; a work not yet finiſhed. I believe he employs ſixty hands. The houſe is a large one: our apartment very convenient: my father pays ſo good a price, that he was accommodated to the utmoſt of their power: the great buſineſs they carry on here, renders the place lively.—I always thought a large farm-houſe in England the moſt chearful habitation in the world. My father rides about continually. He has not yet taken any journey except a ſlight one to the banks of Lake Ontario; which threw him quite into raptures.—He ſays it is the fineſt country he ever beheld, and longs to be better acquainted with it—but as a journey in this part of the world is not performed in a ſhort time, he does not deſign undertaking one before I am perfectly ſatisfied with my ſituation at Mr. Jones's. I

am naturally fearful, but believe there is here no reaſon to be uneaſy, for the people ſeem to be very civil and obliging; and I am to have John, Richard and Ann, beſides my own maid left with me whenever my father goes. I don't doubt but you think me very ſtrange and inſipid; but, my dear, you know how paſſionately fond I am of muſick, and many are the hours I amuſe myſelf at my harpſichord.

As to Mr. Hay, I have received two letters from him ſince we arrived—he rants away like a ſad forſaken lover to be ſure, but the man muſt have patience; I have not wrote to him yet.

Something I fear has happened to my brother; he has been abſent from us on a little tour, three weeks longer than we expected.

Well, Kitty, I muſt conclude this moſt tedious of all tireſome epiſtles, and aſſure you that I am, &c.

HARRIET CHETWYN.

LETTER III.

To Mr. Boyde.

INDEED, my friend, you muſt allow me yet to aſſert the juſtneſs of thoſe principles on which I found my preſent conduct. —Your reaſoning is certainly ſpecious, but far from being concluſive; and there is a ſlight ſtrain of compliment intermixed with your arguments, which, however generally agreeable, has little weight with me. It is the earneſt wiſh of my ſoul, that I may conduct myſelf through life with that ſteady and determined perſeverance in the path of unprejudiced reaſon, which can alone render a man ſuperior to the fopperies of opinion and faſhion. This neceſſary reſolution is the moſt philoſophic guide on which the human mind can depend.

You think it ſtrange that I ſhould forſake my native country, the peculiar reſidence of every charm that can entice mankind, to prefer one region to another; to take up my abode

abode among ſavages in the boundleſs woods of America; but I flatter myſelf that had you ſeen as much of the poliſhed European world as I have, you would think there was nothing ſo extraordinary in the reſolution: I reſided ſome time in ſeveral parts of Europe, and formed an extenſive acquaintance with men whoſe names would flatter the vanity of ſome travellers to repeat: In a word, I rendered myſelf as complete a maſter of European manners as I was able; and it was the reflections I drew from that knowledge which induced me to ſeek for more natural ideas and purer practice in a country juſt on the verge of cultivation—for I laid it down as a maxim, that a country muſt abound in the neceſſaries of life before the ſuperfluities could deluge it with luxury and vice.

You did me injuſtice to ſuppoſe I ſhould make ſuch imprudent haſte to purchaſe: I have too much experience to ruſh at once into the completion of a ſcheme with a juvenile eagerneſs, before every conſequence was

weighed, and actual local knowledge had removed every objection.

Your uneaſineſs about my daughter is groundleſs: ſhe is of a diſpoſition formed by nature for being happy in every ſituation: the little penetration I am maſter of, muſt have been poorly employed if I had not been able ſo to manage ſuch a docile mind, as to render it equally happy in an American wood or a London aſſembly. At this you will ſmile, but I am miſtaken if I do not form a little ſociety amidſt theſe romantic ſcenes, where Nature reigns in her majeſtic wildneſs, more conſonant to true reaſon, happineſs and virtue, than can ever be met with amidſt the pompous glare and poliſhed elegance of your vicious climes.—But I have ever dropped the paternal authority as much as poſſible in the tenderneſs of the friend, and if my daughter diſappoints my expectation, ſhe knows a word is ſufficient.—My ſon has a reliſh for travelling, which renders his abode in America hitherto agreeable: was it founded leſs in a love of novelty, I own I ſhould be better

pleaſed;

pleaſed; but I have little reaſon to complain; and his fortune is amply ſufficient to ſettle him whereſoever his inclination leads.

Never can I allow the vain ſophiſtry of modern times to influence my judgment ſo vilely as to render it more agreeable to reſide in the midſt of the moſt frightful vices, the moſt conſuming debauchery, the moſt diſguſting immorality—merely becauſe this horrible detail is tinſell'd over with the varniſh of riches, arts, elegance and diſſipation—rather than paſs through life amidſt ſimplicity and innocence, labour, health and chearfulneſs—Reflect one moment on the contamination of European refinements—What a contraſt!

In anſwer to your ideas of this country, ſuffice it to ſay, they are as wide from truth as the Poles are aſunder! Your's,

P. CHETWYN.

LETTER IV.

Miſs HERVEY to Miſs CHETWYN.

INDEED, my dear friend, you are ſo intolerably inſipid, that I have ſcarce any patience with you.—You are as eaſy, as unconcerned, as contented and as happy, ſurrounded with clowns and ſavages, as if in the full meridian of ſplendor, ſhining at a ball. I can write nothing but reproaches:—your conduct is ſo inſufferable, that I think 'tis pity you ſhould ever ſee any thing but woods and ſtreams. You talk to me of angling! What! cool my heels by the ſide of ſome purling brook, watching with endleſs attention a floating cork! Oh! this is charming amuſement! ſo rural! ſo innocent! and ſo entertaining! Ha! ha! ha! Had but my father made me ſuch a propoſal, and with ſuch good nature as your's did, ſhould not I have been ſtark mad to have left London for the ſavage wilds of America? Horrible! But deteſtable as your ſituation is, don't fail writing as often as the mail will allow you; for,

for, be you in whatever country, reſt aſſured nothing that concerns you can be indifferent to me.

This plaguy fellow Edgerton, ſtill peſters me with his troubleſome nonſenſe, though he muſt know how much I hate him: It would be quite inſufferable if the man was not a good figure; but he dreſſes well and underſtands the faſhion; and there is ſome credit in allowing him to dangle a little: but I muſt think your brother's friend, the Colonel, twenty times over a finer gentleman: what hurts me moſt is my father's fondneſs for Edgerton; he has a wonderful opinion of him, and I ſee plainly would like to have me think as well of him as he does—but never can that be. But I abhor the idea of being a ſlave to thoſe imperious men; and he that does clap a chain on me, muſt be ſomething a little out of the common road.

Tueſday night. Edgerton here as uſual; he was ſo impertinent as to inſiſt on attending me to the aſſembly; and my father ſo abſurd as to promote it: he expected dancing with me,

me, but I refuſed him, and afterwards danced with Colonel Forreſter; if any thing would ſhew him how little agreeable he was to me, I think it would be ſuch treatment; but the fellow has ſo much bronze, that nothing can daunt him: he was full of gallantry to me all the evening, and while I was ſitting in one corner of the room with Miſs Richardſon and Forreſter, he was jaunting away, and fell on one knee, and ſeizing my hand kiſſed it haſtily; with the other I gave him an admirable box on the ear, which quite ſtruck him aſide, and totally diſcompoſed his powdered hair. He call'd me a vile fury, and ſwore he'd be revenged. The Colonel laugh'd, and Miſs Richardſon was quite frightened. My gentleman, however, ſeem'd to have forgot his anger before the evening was over, and returned to his former ſlippancy. He had the aſſurance to offer me his chariot, becauſe our coach was not at the door the moment we came down. I have a worſe opinion of him every time I meet him; and it is heightened by the difference

ence there is between him and Colonel Forreſter, a contraſt greatly to his diſadvantage. I own I am often ſurprized you ſhould have treated ſo coldly a man ſo much the gentleman.

Thurſday. This morning about eleven o'clock a lady knocked at our door, and deſired to ſpeak with me; ſhe was ſhewed up to my dreſſing room. She had the appearance of a very agreeable woman; but I never ſaw her before. After the common civilities—If it is not impertinent, Madam, may I preſume to aſk if one Mr. Edgerton does not at preſent pay his addreſſes to you?

Pay his addreſſes to me, Madam! replied I: I ſhould think him exceeding impertinent if he did.

I would not be thought unpolite on any account, but he ſurely is rather particular? —A Tendreſſe or ſo—

Really, Madam, you muſt allow me to think *your* queſtions rather *particular*; but it is a ſubject I can ſet in a clear light in two words.

You

You are very obliging.

Know then, Madam, Mr. Edgerton has of late been what you call particular to me; what I call exceedingly free—infinitely troubleſome to me—and laſtly, I hate the ſight of him.

You ſatisfy me ſufficiently, Madam.

May I now requeſt, Madam, the motive of your making theſe inquiries?

Mr. Edgerton has uſed me exceeding ill, which, I apprehend, you will readily believe when I tell you, I am his wife.

His wife!

Even ſo: I have ſome particular reaſons which made me deſirous of knowing the truth of the reports I heard of his connection with you, Madam, and you have been extremely kind in ſo freely telling it. Could you favour me with an interview with him, a little ſudden—à la bruſquement, or ſo?—

With all my heart, Madam; and I think, if any thing will be able to confound his aſſurance, it will be your preſence here.

We

We were ſettling the time moſt likely for the rencounter, when my father entered the room to tell me that Colonel Forreſter and Mr. Edgerton drank tea with us in the afternoon.

I then agreed with the unknown lady, that ſhe ſhould be with me by five o'clock.—She was punctual to her time. I contrived it ſo that my father ſhould be engaged with the Colonel in the dining-room, and I knew well enough the other would ſoon be with me; for his impudence is proof againſt every thing. Mrs. Edgerton and myſelf then dreſſed ourſelves nearly alike; and to aſſiſt the ſimilitude, each put on a hat and ſhade, and wrapp'd up our faces as if for the tooth-ach. I ſhould obſerve to you, that her heighth and ſize are exactly mine. I then ordered my maid to come into the room about a quarter of an hour after Mr. Edgerton, and tell him a perſon wanted to ſpeak with him; and when he had got half way down to pretend a miſtake, and ſend him up again: Mrs. Edgerton remaining concealed in my cloſet.

In

In comes my gentleman as expected, but unluckily the Colonel with him: I was quite angry at ſeeing the plot ſo near being ſpoiled; but rejoiced to ſee my father enter a few minutes after, and take the Colonel into his ſtudy to ſhew him a new edition of ſomething. Edgerton directly made up to me, and ſpouted forth abundance of compliments on my diſorder in my face: I converſed freely with him, diſguiſing my voice a little, as if by holding my lips ſhut, and in a ſtrain more familiar than uſual. My ſpark did not let the alteration eſcape him, and I ſuppoſe thought it beſt to catch my caprice as it flew; he was particularly tender, full of compliments, ſighed, and was proceeding when the maid enter'd.—"Sir—here's a perſon would ſpeak a moment with you."—Out he goes.—Into the cloſet whiſks I, and whips Mrs. Edgerton into my chair, ſhowing her the leaning poſture he left me in; and giving her the pitch of my voice, which ſhe imitated in a moment, ſtept behind the ſcreen for the better walking forth to his confuſion.

He returns in a minute: takes his ſeat again—and in the tender ſtrain——"But as I was ſaying, my dear Miſs Hervey, you muſt never relapſe again into an indifference to ſo profound an eſteem as I have for you."

May I believe you?——*replied ſhe, the voice to admiration.*

By heavens! you may——*taking her hand reſpectfully.*

I can ſcarce believe it.

You may indeed—my angel! *(kiſſing her hand.)*

Do you indeed love me?

From the bottom of my ſoul I do.

But I once heard, Mr. Edgerton, that you had a wife——Is that true?

A wife! my charmer! ridiculous. Never was there a woman that could make the leaſt impreſſion on my heart but you, 'tis you are reſerv'd to make me happy, ſupremely bleſt——

You never had a wife then?

Never.——[*She ſtarting up—throwing off her diſguiſe in a moment—her eyes all fury, and*

her attitude that of paſſion itſelf—and I, burſting from the ſcreen.]——So, Sir! So! Never married! No wife! Vile, deteſted lyar!—

Me.] You love me from the bottom of your ſoul!

She.] Wretch! baſe deceiver! A wife! Ridiculous.——[*He the very picture of guilty confuſion—his impudence overſet; ſtaring at us by turns.*———

Me.] My angel!—*I* am reſerv'd to make you happy!

She.] Thou mean, baſe, pitiful fellow! deſpicably ridiculous!

A plague confound you both—*replied he*, and ran out of the room——and out of the houſe in two minutes.

My father, with the Colonel, hearing a little buſtle, came haſtily into the room, and with ſome ſurprize enquired if any thing was the matter: I told him the whole tale, not forgetting the palpable guilt and confuſion of Mr. Edgerton. He was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment; queſtioned the lady ſlightly on ſome circumſtances of the affair,

and

and found no reaſon to doubt of her huſband being a worthleſs man. Colonel Forreſter did not ſeem to reliſh the humour of the affair; and I thought looked aſquint at the wife. My father politely enough requeſted her company at tea, and made a tender of his ſervices, if they could have any good effect between her and Mr. Edgerton. She thanked him with ſeveral expreſſions of obligation, but waved having any thing to do with a man that had ſo notoriouſly forfeited his honour—and hinted that the chief motive of her taking the liberty ſhe had done with me, was to prevent my being deceived by a man ſo extremely falſe as Mr. Edgerton.

After tea, whilſt my father and Colonel Forreſter were deep in politicks, I had a good deal of chat with her. She is really a moſt agreeable woman—lively, ſenſible and entertaining. I requeſted the favour of her further acquaintance; and believe we ſhall be very good friends. This you may think imprudent, without knowing more of her—

but you know, child, when I think a woman agreeable and witty, I always cultivate her acquaintance without making *too* minute enquiries. Adieu.

You will be troubled again soon from

Your, &c.

C. HERVEY.

LETTER V.

To Colonel FORRESTER.

I HAVE no ſort of doubt but you thought me on the very verge of lunacy, when I wrote my laſt letter——but no ſuch matter truly: all ſober truth and living reality. I believe I was before a little incoherent, and did not expreſs myſelf in ſuch a manner, as was neceſſary for your underſtanding me——and now, on the contrary, I ſhall tire you with minuteneſs.

Since I arrived in America, I have been perpetually entertained on all ſides with accounts of the romantick beauty of the back country on the great lakes and rivers; and as I in all probability ſhould never again have an opportunity of viewing them, I determined before I ſhould leave the country to take a tour, if I found it practicable, through the fineſt part of it. I wrote you before of my father's ſituation and ſchemes, and you

may judge from them that he would not have diſliked accompanying me; but leaving my ſiſter at the lodgings would by no means do; therefore he contented himſelf with taking ſmall tours, frequently returning to ſee that ſhe was in an agreeable and proper ſituation. As I was a great ſtranger to the country, and the precautions to be obſerved in travelling through it, I determined to attend my father in one or two of his journeys (marches I ſhould ſay) and then take rather a longer one by myſelf, before I attempted the grand tour of North America. This latter part of my plan I have juſt executed, and in it met with the adventure which threw me into a delirium perceptible enough in my laſt to you.

I found the journey inconceivably difficult: my firſt object was the country which lies on the banks of lake Erie; and as I was determined to view as many of the pictureſque beauties of the ſcene as poſſible; the wildneſs of the country was a great impediment to travelling through it: it would have been impoſſible to penetrate it, had I not ſecured

two

two Indians for guides, who were of infinite ſervice to me. The face of the country is beyond any thing I ever beheld. As I was breaking from one landſkip to another, in a part of it particularly thick and impenetrable, and where my Indians had never been before; we ſtumbled as it were on a ſpot, which may give you ſome idea of the country in general.

We were very near turning aſide from the track before us on account of a thicket of briars, brambles, and almoſt impenetrable thorns; when our Indians diſcovered an aſcent up a pretty ſteep and rugged hill, which they apprehended I *might* be able to ſcale, and effected it with no little difficulty. The hill was covered with a thick wood, which we traverſed for ſome time, and then began to deſcend; ſtill inveloped in it.—We ſoon entered a ſmall valley ſunk in the ſide of the hill, which feaſted our eyes with a landſkip truly American. From one ſide of it, we looked through an irregular arch of prodigious oak and walnut-trees, on the

lake, a fine and ſmooth expanſe of water ſtretching away on each ſide to a great diſtance, but broke in front by a woody iſland. On the other ſide, and at a diſtance in our front view, ran a circular ridge of hills (mountains you would call them in England) completely covered with vaſt foreſt trees from the edge of the fine valley below us, to their very ſummits, and forming the moſt romantic amphitheatre of wood imagination can paint. Surrounded on one ſide by this noble mound, appeared beneath us a valley (if I may ſo call it) of gently-ſwelling hills, ſlopes and lawns, dales, ſtreams and caſcades, ſcattered with all the enchanting negligence of the moſt picturesque fancy. The moment I threw my eye over this delicious ſpot, all my faculties were for a moment ſuſpended, I could ſcarce draw my breath for gazing with ſuch ſtatue-like attention at the amazing beauties of this little ſpot. A ſmall white houſe, different from thoſe raiſed by the Indians, caught my eye, at the diſtance of about a mile: it had the appear-

ance

ance of a neat farm-houſe in England. I reſolved to deſcend into this valley of delight, and approach a habitation which ſeem'd dropt from heaven.

As we moved gently along, a thouſand freſh objects ſtruck our admiring eyes, the ſlight vallies which interſected the moſt verdant ſwelling lawns I ever beheld, were all watered by little gurgling brooks——ſometimes breaking into ſlight ſtreams, and then again contracting their green banks to a meer trickling rill. Here was a broken caſcade tumbling down a hill almoſt overſhadowed with pendent wood, the falling ſtream ſcarce to be ſeen but in breaking glades through a thicket of trees. There, a fine riſing ſlope ſpotted with a variety of beautiful unknown trees, the lake glittering through them; with herds of deer and beeves grazing on every part of it. As we approached the houſe, the landſkip grew yet more enchanting, the lawns ſeem'd more elegant, the ſound of falling waters unſeen, were heard——innumerable vines trailed their

their branches up the trees, their tendrils and ripe cluſters of fruit hanging from every part in beautiful feſtoons——a few incloſures with ſtanding corn gave a variety to the landſkip——and the houſe threw the gilding of chearfulneſs and ſociety over the whole ſcene.

Health, content and ſerenity, thought I, muſt be the inhabitants of this delicious manſion! Imparadis'd in all that nature can beſtow!——I entered the door as I would have done the temple of a Deity——and I found it the reſidence of miſery and diſeaſe!

In a ſmall but neat room ſat an old man, whoſe countenance was marked with the furrows of extreme age, leaning againſt the back of his chair; his neck incloſed in the arm of a young woman of more than human beauty, weeping moſt mournfully. So pathetick a ſpectacle ſtruck a horror to my ſoul, which ſtopt me from advancing; I made a ſign to my attendants to remain without, and ſtood gazing with admiration at the angel

angel before me, and with a heart-felt ſorrow at her melancholy ſituation. The old man giving a deep groan——ſaid with a faultering voice——"It will ſoon be over, my child!"——but moving his eyes towards the door, beheld me and ſtarted—The daughter (ſo I of courſe apprehended her to be) alſo ſaw me, and gave a ſhriek. I advanced a few ſteps with haſte——"Venerable old man," ſaid I, "fear me not; I am your countryman, and touch'd with ſorrow at ſo melancholy a ſight.——Can I ſerve you?"

"From whence came you?" replied he, eyeing me with ſome attention——"This is ſurprizing: how came you here?"

"Travelling to ſee the beauties of the country I climbed a rugged hill, and accident threw me on your abode."——He made an effort to raiſe himſelf in his chair, but was near fainting——the daughter all attention to his ſituation was ſhocked at his weakneſs—and eyed me by turns with great amazement.

Would

Would to heaven, young man, I knew you —but that's impoſſible! *(pauſing, and drawing his breath with difficulty)* I have ſcarce an hour to live——'Tis not for that I grieve ——but alas!——my daughter.——

The tears burſting from his eyes—he fell into a ſwoon, and I thought had expired. She was in agonies at the ſight—and with the voice of heaven——Oh! Sir, aſſiſt my father!

The old man, however, recovered the ſhock, but ſhewed by his voice that his end was near. Turning his head towards me,

Theſe hoſpitable woods have for theſe many years been my happy refuge from the barbarous attacks of fortune in my native country—my child was then an infant, and till this hour ne'er ſaw an European—*(after a pauſe to fetch his breath, proceeding)* Here ſhe has exiſted innocent and happy——but what a change, if her pure mind, unguarded againſt the vile practices of the world, ſhould now be open to its ſnares——This!—this

is what torments me.——*It was ſome time before he could go on.*——I had a ſcheme—but that's no more.——Could I depend on your virtue!——But how vain is that idea!——You live in the world——in the very world, in that deteſted world that I have forſaken!—The daughter leaving the room in an agony of ſorrow.

Reſt your mind at peace, Sir——I ſee how fearful you are that your beloved child ſhould ever be expoſed to thoſe cruel misfortunes from which no one is exempt who lives like other men. I will ſay nothing in my own favour; but I will ſwear by all that's ſacred, ſhe ſhall, in every inſtance of her life, have all the protection in my power to give her——I have an honourable, worthy and humane father—and a tender and affectionate ſiſter, that at preſent reſide not a fortnight's journey from this place. She ſhall in us enjoy a father, a brother, and a ſiſter.——

Ah! Stranger, but my child is beautiful, and you are young! Alas! the world! the world! with all its train of ills!

Believe

Believe my word——rely upon my honour—I would undergo the cruelleſt ſtrokes to which humanity is liable, rather than ſpeak to your angelic daughter, whoſe mind muſt be purity and innocence itſelf, in terms unmeet for the moſt generous ſoul: nor will I ever preſer a ſuit unto her affections—— nor ever ſpeak one ſyllable of love, if you now give me abſolute charge unto the contrary.

Heaven direct her deſtiny!——The hand of Death's upon me. I have no time for thoughts of ſuch importance. Call in my child! let me once bleſs her—ere I die—.

I ſtept into the other room, and calling —"Madam!"—I heard the old man faulter out——"Call Emmera. She will not underſtand you."

The angelic creature ran to her father, the tears flowing down her beautiful cheeks. I followed her; and the venerable dying man, holding out his hand to her——

Heaven

Heaven bleſs you, my child, we muſt now part.——Truſt in the great God's Providence for your protection: I have hope that he ſent this ſtranger for your ſecurity.——

Oh! my father! you muſt not——muſt not die! Alas! poor Emmera!

With his laſt breath he uttered, Obſerve me well, my Emmera! Unto this ſtranger I entruſt you:—while he behaves unto you as he ought, depend upon him for your ſecurity: I need not give you any inſtructions for your conduct—I am not in pain for it, unleſs you are deceived, and fall into baſe hands: Do not forget your prayer to heaven, and always remember that God's Providence is your beſt defence! Adieu, my child!—— *Then turning to me*—Young man! you know not the treaſure of that virtuous maid! for her dying father's ſake be unto her (in whatever capacity) a friend and protector to her innocence——Heaven bleſs you! Heaven bleſs you both!——

With theſe words the good old man expired without a groan, and ſeemingly with-

out pain. I was infinitely affected at the natural and pathetic grief of the amiable Emmera. Her ſorrow was lively and violent.—She conſidered herſelf as abſolutely undone, and bemoaned her unhappy fate as irremediable and endleſs. I uſed all the arguments and perſuaſions in the world to moderate her ſorrow—but her idea of what and who I was, was too indefinite for her to liſten to me, as might be expected in a young woman ſo ſolitary and wretched as herſelf.

I thought ſhe might like beſt, after ſo melancholy a cataſtrophe, to be left ſome time alone: I therefore requeſted her leave to take a walk about their little farm, to which ſhe aſſented with a natural civility; but added, that ſhe had not the heart to attend me, but hoped I would excuſe her. She ſhut herſelf up in the room with her father's corpſe, and I heard her weep moſt movingly. I ordered my Indians and ſervant to keep out of her ſight till I returned; and at the ſame time, ſhowed them a ſmall barn with

ſome

ſome clean ſtraw, which I pointed out as a more agreeable lodging than many they had lately had.

I made my ramble about two hours long, a ſpace of time I filled with a million of reflections on the unaccountable fate of this innocent orphan, who, had it not been for my accidental arrival, would have been expoſed to all the horrors of a dreary ſolitude, in the midſt of wild and unbounded foreſts. The motive which could induce her father to hazard the leaving her in ſuch a ſituation, was to me amazing.

On my return, I found her in another room ſilent and melancholy as death itſelf; ſhe had ſpread a cloth on a ſmall table, and ſet on it ſome plates of exquiſite fruit, a loaf of bread, and a mug of milk which ſeemed warm from the cow. With a delicacy and an agreeableneſs in her manner, I never met with in the moſt refined people, ſhe deſired me to eat and drink if I choſe it; and aſked me if I would not call in my com-

 panions?

panions?—By which I perceived that ſhe had ſeen my attendants.—I told her who they were, and informed her that they had proviſions with them, but that if ſhe would permit them to lye in her barn I ſhould eſteem it as a favour. She replied, ſhe was ſorry there were not beds for them, but the houſe contained only three. I thanked her with genuine gratitude for her kindneſs, and aſſured her the barn was highly ſufficient: as for myſelf, I eat a few mouthfuls of bread, and took a draught of milk: I preſſed her to eat, but in vain; ſhe could touch nothing. The remainder of the day paſſed in a melancholy ſilence—very little converſation——I was unwilling to urge her too ſoon to quit ſuch mournful ideas. Before ſun-ſet, ſhe excuſed herſelf to me, and retired to her chamber, telling me the door on the left hand at the top of the ſtair-caſe, which ſhe would ſet open, contained a bed for me. Soon as it was nearly dark, I went to ſhut the houſe-door, but to my aſtoniſhment found there was none. I went to bed, but had little ſleep

that night. Could I deſcribe this enchanting maid, you would not wonder at it—but ſhe is paſt all deſcription.

Her perſon is perfectly well made, eaſy, elegant, and moſt aſtoniſhingly graceful; an happier figure never came from the hand of Nature; nor did I ever behold ſuch divine grace ſo diffuſed over every limb—ſo playing in every motion——Her face that of the compleateſt beauty, with an inexpreſſible ſweetneſs——a ſoftneſs of countenance quite enchanting. Her eyes! the immediate meſſengers of heaven!——No; 'tis impoſſible to conceive the mild angelic ſoul, which beams through every look!——Away! vile pen; why attempt to deſcribe what would beggar the very pencil of Correggio!

I perceived ſcarce any abatement of her grief the next day, which made me deſirous to get her father buried, and if poſſible engage her to leave directly a place which would every minute remind her of her loſs, and for ever awaken moſt melancholy reflec-

tions in her mind: for I could eaſily conceive, that a loſs of this nature, to her who knew none but her father; in which name was comprehended the little circle of her friendſhip and acquaintance; muſt feel the ſtroke with infinitely greater ſenſibility than any perſon in the world could do. I accordingly threw out ſome hints, as if for enquiry, Whether there was any particular ſpot that her late father had fixed on for the ſad purpoſe of his interment? ſhe immediately told me, that he had frequently deſired her to have him buried under a large oak, at a ſmall diſtance from the houſe. She ſhewed me the ſpot; I aſked her for a ſpade, and myſelf dug the grave, and interred him in it ——reading the burial ſervice over him. The beauteous Emmera joined me with great fervour of devotion, and we together mingled our tears on the ſacred ſpot that contained the only remains of her dear father. I had ſcarce one word with her during the remainder of the day: the next, I diſmiſſed

my

my Indians and one of my men, keeping only Robert, on whom, in every inſtance, I could fully depend: I diſpatched the other to my ſiſter, with two lines juſt intimating that ſhe was not to expect me at the time I mentioned for returning, and gave her a ſlight idea of the adventure I had met with, charging her to ſay nothing of it to any one —nor ſuffer a meſſenger to be ſent to me on any account.

Her ſilent melancholy continued near a week; and had it held a year I ſhould have waited her every look and ſyllable with the moſt reverential fondneſs—for Oh! Charles, I found myſelf ſhot to my very vitals. But all was adoration——I conſidered her as an angel of light—rather than a mere mortal. ——Addreſſing her one day in the garden,

Surely, Madam, ſaid I, you ought to place ſome bounds to your grief, notwithſtanding the greatneſs of your loſs. One who has ſo much reflection as yourſelf, muſt conſider the neceſſity of bearing the

ſtrokes, with which Heaven thinks proper to inflict us, patiently, and with due ſubmiſſion to the hand that ſends them.

What you ſay, Sir, has great reaſon in it, and is juſt what my poor father has often obſerved——I ſhall ever retain the higheſt reverence for the ideas which he recommended.—But is it poſſible that I ſhould not grieve for his loſs! As it is impoſſible, why aſſert the neceſſity of not doing it?

I am ſenſible how impoſſible that would be. ——You ought to grieve for the loſs of ſo good a father——but your grief ſhould not be exceſſive.——Make me ſo happy, my deareſt Madam, as to ſay that you will abate your melancholy, and return to the management of your affairs as you did while your father was living. In all that is poſſible, I will ſupply his place; tell me but what he accuſtomed himſelf regularly to perform, and I will endeavour to do the ſame.

And do you think you *could* do the ſame?

Why not?

Are

Are not you a gentleman? Perhaps a man of fortune?

What then, my Emmera! Why ſhould not I do as your father did?

Can you plough, and dig, and reap, and thraſh? Can you uſe an ax to fell a lofty tree?

Why not?——I will undertake it.

Aye; you betray yourſelf——you would no ſooner touch the plough, but I ſhould ſee how poorly you would perform the work. Thoſe are occupations you are not uſed to. I took notice while you dug my dear father's grave, how little you muſt have been uſed to handle a ſpade. 'Tis true, Sir, I never remember being in any other ſpot than the ſmall one ſurrounding this little houſe; my father brought me here an infant; the moment I could walk alone, I followed him into all kinds of work, and as I grew in ſtrength, exerted the little I had in his aſſiſtance: but it was not the uſe of my limbs alone which he ſuffered me to practiſe: he took continual care to cultivate my mind:

Early he taught me to read and write, and for ever explained to me the few books he thought worth preſerving: he gave me ſuch lively deſcriptions of the gay and buſy world, particularly England, that I am not ſo ignorant, Sir, as you might naturally imagine; I have no faint idea of the manners of the world; and well know how ſtrange and uncouth mine muſt appear to you——I wiſh not, however, to change them, but enjoy my own ſimplicity. I hint theſe things, that you may treat me rather as what I am, than one totally ignorant of all I have not ſeen.

My fair Emmera! your ſpeech amazes me! What an uncommon man muſt that valuable father have been, that in theſe ſolitary woods could educate ſuch a woman! Who have you known beſides that wonderful man?

None,

How came your father then by his houſe—his furniture—theſe implements of agriculture, and many other conveniencies you enjoy?

All

All through his neighbours——whom you call the Indians.

Where do they live?

On the other ſide the lake. My father, Sir, was a man full of the moſt uſeful knowledge; and when he determined to ſettle in the wilds of America, he at the ſame time reſolved to have no connection with any Europeans, or their coloniſts; he brought his houſe with him to frame and erect on the ſpot he choſe, with numerous implements of the moſt uſeful kind. He was infinitely ſerviceable to the Indians, and he long experienced the difference of Indian and Engliſh gratitude: they built his barn and ſtable, with a few other ſlight conveniencies—— they obſerved moſt religiouſly his injunctions, never to diſturb his ſolitude without a ſignal, unleſs on ſome emergency of their own wherein he could be uſeful to them; and this has happened but once in my remembrance.

And what might be his ſignal?

There is a lofty tree at the diſtance of near half a mile, on which he hoiſted a flag; which ſcarce ever hung a day without ſome Indian appearing to know his wants: theſe have been exceeding few, and he has repaid his benefactors ten-fold; but ſo highly have they valued him, that no European till yourſelf ever diſcovered his retreat——ſuch was his deſire—and notwithſtanding ſome bloody wars have happened, as we ſlightly heard, never were we moleſted.

And did your father alone perform the labour of this farm?

He did, with ſome aſſiſtance from me. Surely you cannot ſuppoſe that I was idle while my father worked!

And what in general was your employment?

I did every thing which required no great ſtrength. The dairy I managed entirely; ſifted the corn my father thraſhed; and ſee theſe rows of wheat and pulſe, theſe are of my weeding, ſometimes I hoe them: on ſome

ſome occaſions I have ploughed, and done more laborious work; but this was ſeldom.

Is this poſſible, Emmera! And did you not ſink beneath your fatigue?

That's the queſtion of an Engliſhman, not an Indian. You ſhould ſeparate your ideas. Fatigue! No: perfect health of body and ſerenity of mind were my conſtant companions; 'till that cruel ſtroke deprived me of a father! Now alas! how different!——

Now, Madam, there is no neceſſity for it. For what ſhould you labour now? Your excellent father recommended you to my care, and believe me it ſhall be the buſineſs of my life to procure you every ſatisfaction and comfort this world can give. But ſurely ſo ſolitary a ſituation cannot now as before be equally agreeable!

Ah, Sir! I underſtand you well: you mean to move me from this retreat——to carry me into the world——to——

Why are you alarmed, my deareſt Emmera? Fear nothing I can do—for be aſſured

I never

I never will name any ſcheme to you which your own inclinations ſhall not induce you to promote.

That is very kind. But ſurely you will not break your word?

Not for my life. By heaven I ſwear that nothing ſhall be the guide of my actions but your commands.

I cannot command: I was never uſed to it. But I hope you will not take me from hence.

Not 'till you deſire it yourſelf.

That I never ſhall. I would not venture in the world——No——on no account. I cannot ſo ſoon forget my dear father's words.

Your own inclinations ſhall alone guide you.

But can you, Sir, ſubmit to live in this manner? That can never be; you have many connections in the world—nor did my father mean that *you* ſhould become a Solitary in defence of me.

I would become any thing in defence of you, my Emmery. It would be no ſubmiſſion in me to live with you here, but would

would give me infinite happineſs to live with you any where. Surely you could never think of living here alone!

Certainly, Sir, not by choice; but much rather would I do it, and take the labour of the whole on myſelf, than go into the world, a prey to all its miſeries!

Well, my Emmery, we will not talk now of leaving ſo beautiful a ſpot as this is. But you muſt inſtruct me in what I am to perform—and my ſervant——

What can you think of keeping a ſervant to wait on us——and plague us with his diſcontents?——I have heard my father often ſay that ſervants will ſeldom be content with what ſatisfies their maſters—and that the very nature of ſervice debaſes the human mind. No, Sir, never think of living in ſuch a retirement as this is, and keep a ſervant. You have parted with ſome of them ——and ſurely you will ſend the reſt away. Pray heaven they may never think of returning, for then by degrees this ſolitary ſpot may

may become as well known as other inhabited countries. And what neceſſity for a ſervant? Were any thing particular to happen, I could hoiſt the ſignal, and there is not an Indian but would venture his life in my defence.

Well, my charming Emmera, it ſhall be as you deſire: I will ſend away my ſervant, and we will live together as you and your father did—Is it not time that you ſhould milk the cows? If you would ſhow me the way, I would go and drive them up.

And do you really mean what you ſay?

I do indeed.

Then you are very good. I wiſh I may not be the cauſe of making you unhappy, but I think you won't——Would to heaven my father was alive! How pleaſed would he be with you!——

Come, Emmery, where are the cows?

To be as good as my word, I diſpatched Robert to my ſiſter with a letter, deſiring her to be perfectly eaſy about me, and ſend no one

one for a fortnight; then to diſpatch Robert to the rugged hill at the entrance of this valley, where I have pitched on a ſpot for him to examine for letters, which he is to take to my ſiſter.—Adieu, Charles, I am in all human probability fixed for a time. Never will I break my word with this divine creature, whoſe ſoul is nothing but amiable excellence——heaven itſelf!

P. CHETWYN.

LETTER VI.

Miſs CHETWYN to Miſs HERVEY.

I READ your letter, my deareſt Kitty, with the greateſt pleaſure imaginable: Dull as I am myſelf, I can reliſh your livelineſs and wit with infinite ſatisfaction. You chide me for being ſo inſipid as to be happy ——Rather pity me, and in charity ſend me plenty of your letters. Poor Edgerton! I am greatly miſtaken if you have not given him his cure: He has turned out juſt what I ſhould ſuppoſe an intimate of Colonel Forreſter: Excuſe me, my deareſt, but I a little ſuſpect that you have the beginning of a kind of tendreſſe for him: There is a ſomething in your letters, joined to what I recollect, that makes me a little uneaſy. I am very plain in my ſentiments, you know, and never diſguiſe them to my friends: I cannot avoid ſaying a ſyllable or two of that ſpecious man. I have no doubt but your opinion of him

him *at preſent* is the merely thinking him an entertaining, ſenſible, polite gentleman, perfectly well accompliſhed. Reſt there, my dear Kitty—Enquire no further; for I like not the Colonel at bottom, and doubt his principles do him no honour; for Heaven's ſake be on your guard againſt him. You ſee with what freedom I write; and how much I depend on your own impartiality to take in good part, what to many would be thought impertinence. Before I have done with Colonel Forreſter, I muſt lament to you my brother's partiality to him: He has a great opinion of him, and I am fully perſuaded, thinks him a very different man from what he really is. I cannot help regretting the confidence he places in a man, who, I fear, is ſo little deſerving it. He ſcarcely writes to any one elſe in England; I have ſent ſome of his packets to him to the Poſt-office, ſince he has been abſent on a ſtrange tour, which gives me great uneaſineſs.

He is accidentally fallen on the abode of an Engliſh lady, I find, with whom he is deſpe-

rately in love: Her father died ſince he has been there; what his intentions are, I cannot conceive, but he has ſent home his ſervants with ſtrict orders to have no body ſent to him: I can get no intelligence from his people, and cannot conceive what will be the event. This I know, if he has formed a new attachment with this unknown lady, as they call her, he acts very vilely to Miſs Greville—but I am quite in ſuſpence about it, till I hear ſome more circumſtances: who the duce ſhe can be, that he has picked up in that wild country, is inconceivable.

I am entirely reconciled to my way of life here: I like the Jones's extremely; they are very humane, well meaning people. A thouſand thanks to you for the muſick; it will entertain me exceedingly, and comes in very good time, for my father is juſt gone on a freſh tour, and I am not like to ſee him again for ſome time.

Adieu, my dear Kitty; I wait with impatience for your next.

H. Chetwyn.

LETTER VII.

To Mr. CHETWYN.

I AM ſorry to find my friend ſo eloquent in defence of notions, which, I am well perſuaded, have no real foundation in reaſon or philoſophy. You ſay it is the earneſt wiſh of your ſoul to conduct yourſelf through life with ſteadineſs and a determined perſeverance in the paths of unprejudiced reaſon, and render yourſelf ſuperior to the fopperies of opinion and faſhion. A very juſt ſentiment beyond all doubt; but can any one ſuppoſe, that to put it in practice, it is neceſſary to bury one's ſelf in woods and wilds! Nothing more ridiculous! Such a conduct conſiſts in nothing more than flying from thoſe enemies we have not the courage to encounter. How much ſuperior is the life of him who lives in the midſt of vice and temptation, uncontaminated by example—untainted by the ſad influence of the age! Infinitely reſpectable in his oppoſition to the faſhion of the times;

he ſtems the tide of vice; and faces with the ſerenity of virtue the daring enemy ſo fatal to the common herd of mortals.——Let him harbour an unjuſtifiable ſuſpicion of himſelf, and fly his country and her vicious ſons, to bury himſelf in more innocent climes—Does he not, in reſpect to the good of mankind, extinguiſh that virtue, which ought ever to be exerted in their ſupport? Can he have any inducement but indolence, to retire to a people who want him not? To quit a ſervice of trouble and activity, for an idle life of contemplation, ſtudy, and wandering? This may ſuit weak minds, my friend, but is beneath the tone of yours. Let your example ſhine forth at home, with all the ſtern luſtre of philoſophic firmneſs——Purſue your own juſt ideas—fly not the ſhafts of ridicule, but live ſuperior to the fripperies of the age——Let the baſe multitude that will not practiſe what is right, ſee there is one that holds them in diſdain.——This is the man that dreads not the contagion of example—that riſes ſuperior to the caprice of fortune, and

diſplays

diſplays in every ſentiment of his mind—in every action of his life, that magnanimity is her own reward!

Not ſo the man———

But no more:——I will not urge a point, ſelf-evident and clear to a capacity far leſs than your's. Change theſe opinions, ſo injurious to your own glory—nor give me another opportunity to repeat an argument ſo unanſwerable as this. One word more and I have done: It is no contemptible opinion, that the wiſeſt plan, in an age ſo corrupted as this, is to *glide* through life, rather *avoiding* the ſhoals of vice than combating with them—rather attempting to preſerve *one's ſelf* free from infection, than empirically preſcribing for the diſeaſes of *others*. As it is impoſſible to change the complexion of the times, to make no buſtle—but wink at youthful follies, laugh with the multitude, and walk ſerenely o'er the ſtage of life. No Stoic plan—and therefore I have attacked you from another quarter—your own maxims.

You talk, my friend, of forming a little ſociety, perfectly conſonant with reaſon, &c. Surely you cannot be ſo infatuated with every thing wild and American as to ſuppoſe moſt hermit-like retirement may not be practiſed in England. I wiſh in heaven you would give me a commiſſion, and I would anſwer for purchaſing you an eſtate in ſome diſtant county, far from any town, with ſcarce any neighbour but ruſticks. Come over and take poſſeſſion of ſuch a ſpot, and ſuppoſe it to be on the banks of the great lakes if you pleaſe, and ſee if the vain faſhions and vices of the age will find you out in your retirement, if you think proper yourſelf to keep free from them. I know ſome families in the country that live as retired from the world, as you can do in North America.—Nay; ſuppoſe you were on the plan of a deſart iſland, you might nearly—very nearly put it in practice at home, and that in the midſt of ſociety. You might fix on the cattle you thought requiſite, on the implements

plements you would want, on the ſeeds you would chuſe to cultivate, and ſhutting yourſelf up from the world, forſwear all converſe with it.

But whence ariſes the neceſſity of all this? As to your plan of a ſelect ſociety, I queſtion whether the univerſe will yield you a ſpot ſo proper for the ſcheme, as a thouſand you might purchaſe at home; nor any country where your own houſe is ſo ſecure a caſtle, not where you can reſide in it ſo free from all kinds of interruptions.

Not ſo quick—ſay you—If I am a landholder in England, ſo far am I from retirement—or even from the ſociety of only thoſe I chuſe—that I muſt have certain gentlemen for my acquaintance, called aſſeſſors and collectors of taxes—duties—impoſitions—Of aſſeſſors of rates—I muſt ſquabble with rectors about tythes; I muſt be plagued and peſter'd with endleſs diſputes; and ſo far from living retired, lead the life of a pettifogger.

Tell me honeſtly if I have not given your objections fair play, and thrown them into that declamatory ſtrain you uſe ſo much in defence of your preſent conduct.—But to anſwer it in one word. Why not be contented to part with a little pelf to free yourſelf completely from theſe impertinencies? An animal upon two legs,—if you pleaſe you ſhall call him a man, comes to your door; "Sir, the taxes if you pleaſe, they amount to ſo and ſo."—There's your money. Another calls on you for rates; "And, Sir, the village thinks you under-rated, and ſo you are raiſed."—Very well; the ſum?—Now if, inſtead of paying, you quarrel, and will not be content to be impoſed on, I agree to a part of your objection—but to get rid of that expence, you will incur a thouſand times the amount in taking a ſingle trip to American woods to eſcape it.—Indeed, my friend, you muſt change your meaſures, and try retirement at home, before you ſeek it elſewhere.

I forbear teazing you further at preſent, and therefore conclude myſelf, &c.

G. Boyde.

LETTER VIII.

Colonel FORRESTER to Mr. EDGERTON.

FLY to me this moment! A bottle of admirable Burgundy is before me—Here's a bumper to revenge! Joy of my ſoul! I will perſue thee—e'en to the laſt drop of milky blood that taints my manly veins! Come and partake the pleaſures of your friend. I have news from America—from that puppy Chetwyn. Now! now by Heaven I have him! and to his inmoſt ſoul will pour heart-killing poiſon——Grant me but my revenge, juſt Heaven! and I aſk no more. Know, my Dick, that this phantaſtic, whining fool has met with a laſs in the woods of America, who with one glance of her eye has baniſhed Miſs Greville from his ſoul. He is moſt deſperately in love—and rants away moſt ſweetly. Pitiful fellow! —How I deſpiſe the wretch! If the fit holds, I'll ſtrike——I can wait no longer for an opportunity.

portunity.—My ſoul lives on tenter-hooks 'till I ſee him mad—raving with very wretchedneſs! Fool that I was to think his trumpery ſiſter worthy one ſingle thought of mine! To be refuſed by the vile minx! rejected!—and with ſcorn!—Him too—my pretended friend! to give me that friendly hitch——baſe, ſcoundrel fellow!—but his ſoul's beſt happineſs ſhall pay the forfeit—turn'd to deadly gaul and endleſs miſery. Prithee, Dick, come directly: let me unfold my ſcheme unto thee—point out the deadly ſhafts that wait him—and ſhew thee I have not play'd with my revenge like children's idle anger. Would to heaven you had but a ſoul to reliſh it with full goût—thou art an honeſt fellow and pretty ſtaunch—but then that noble ſpirit of revenge, that pride of ſoul, which kindles hell at the ſlight ſhadow of an ill, reſides not in thee. Time may do wonders—however, exerciſe the faculty, and remember among the milky ſons of men he fares the beſt that is moſt dreaded. Apropos; your wife. What a damn'd trick! But

But what's your plan?—puniſh home, or I forſwear thee converſe. Clap her immediately into mother Staine's mad-houſe: I will furniſh you with any aſſiſtance you want: command my purſe and ſword—you know they are your's. That convenient Devil will do her buſineſs to your mind; and if you take not this proceeding, by Heavens! Dick, thou art worthy nothing but to be tied to her apron-ſtrings. Strike home—or live her ſlave. Adieu. Come immediately, for I embark with my myrmidons for America in a day or two. Your's,

C. FORRESTER.

LETTER IX.

Miſs Hervey to Miſs Chetwyn,

SO—ſo—my friend Harriet! Very ſage and ſententious indeed! In love with the Colonel! Not ſo faſt, my dear—*You* are ſuperior to the ſhafts of love, 'tis true—(indeed I know not how you ſhould well be otherwiſe, while ſo very American) but don't imagine your friends weaker than Heaven has made them——enough ſo of conſcience, without the leaſt of your addition. No, my Harriet——my heart will not ſo ſoon be caught by my eye——Nay, ſhould I find myſelf entrapped, I really believe I ſhould hate a fellow for preſuming to make the ſlighteſt conqueſt over me.——See, my dear, how truly ridiculous your ſuſpicions are! Your brother! a pretty fellow truly; to let a new miſtreſs be his buſineſs in America. So ſoon forget his old one in England! You ſee what dependance is to be placed on the men. Woe betide us all, that truſt more in

their vows than we would in broken reeds. I ſaw Miſs Greville yeſterday——She had heard of the adventure, and was, I thought, caſt down——but this may be imagination; ſhe certainly put on what chearfulneſs I ſaw in her. The mother cannot ſo well diſſemble: it is eaſy to be ſeen in her how infinitely ſhe is nettled. However, I do not apprehend there is reaſon for any of you to be much alarmed——depend on it this Incognita, this fair Indiana——is nothing but the whim of an accidental hour——A flight of youth! *Violently* in love, you know, they always are——ſuch ſighing, tender ſwains! Ridiculous ſex! to be impoſed on by ſuch abſolute ſtuff and falſehood!

Wedneſday. Well might I abuſe the fellows! I believe there does not exiſt a man that ought to live——All alike!——But you ſhall hear.——Yeſterday afternoon as I was lolling on my ſopha, and wiſhing you were with me, that I might be entertained with laughing at your romantic ideas——who ſhould

ſhould be ſhown up but the airy——the elegant——the agreeable Mrs. Edgerton; all wit, vivacity and ſpirit: the fineſt cordial for melancholy moments imaginable. Exceedingly agreeable ſhe was to me. We laughed over the old adventure once more, and ſhe expreſſed moſt ardent wiſhes to have it in her power to throw Mr. Edgerton again into as ridiculous a light as ſhe did before: I muſt own it would not be a little pleaſing to me. I engaged her to ſtay with me for the Opera; muſic *ſhe adores*, was dying half the evening——There is a good deal of faſhion in this; but ſhe is an agreeable creature, ſo I forgive her. When we wanted to be gone, there was a jumble amongſt the coaches, ours was not in the way, and to get from amidſt the croud of footmen and flambeaux, we each of us ſtept into a chair, and off we moved. Preſently my chair ſtopped, it opened, and out I got ſuppoſing myſelf at home; but I had not got a ſtep from the chair, but a vulgar-looking fellow clapt one arm round my waiſt, and with the

other

other held a handkerchief to my mouth, and in a trice lifted me into a hackney coach, that ſtood cloſe to us. I had not time to think, to ſpeak or move, but was drove off at a great rate in the twinkling of an eye.

Taking the handkerchief from my mouth, and finding that I did not ſhriek, he left it at liberty. I laughed out at the fellow, "Who the duce ſet you to carry me off?" He gave me no anſwer——"But whoever it was that gave you your commiſſion, you are a moſt confounded bungler to miſtake your lady ſo much." "Oh! Madam, that trick won't take with me." In about an hour the coach ſtop'd at the door of a houſe which ſeemed to ſtand alone; we had been off the ſtones ſome time. An ill looking, middle aged woman received me at the door, took hold of my hand, and led me rather rudely into a back room.

My ſpirits never forſook me one moment, as I had ever the utmoſt contempt for ſuch abſurd and ridiculous ſchemes as theſe. I could not conceive who could be the plotter

of

of the miſchief; and was moſt inclined to think the raſcal had made a miſtake in his prey.

In the name of all that's ridiculous, what am I brought here for?

For no harm to you at all.

May be ſo. But that blundering fellow is miſtaken: It is impoſſible I ſhould be the woman you want.

Miſtaken! No—no—he knows his buſineſs better than that comes to.—*(And turning to a ſervant)* You ſee how mad ſhe is—quite gone—but we'll cure her.—Mad!—Now I ſee plainly you are deceived! What is my name? Your name! what matters what your name is!—I know you well enough—but you ſhall ſoon be well—your illneſs ſhan't hold long—So ſaying, ſhe would have conducted me out of the room: I did not much reliſh going, and therefore with a ſmile on my countenance, I bid the maid leave the room, and walking up to the woman,

Lookye, Miſtreſs I don't know who—let me undeceive you—play none of your tricks

tricks with me, for I know the world a little too well. Tell me under whoſe orders you play your part; and I will engage to give you double the ſum you receive from him, be it what it will.

She ſtared at me, but anſwered:

Come—come—none of this nonſenſe—Go—go up to bed.

Hold your tongue, and attend to me. I am independent of all the world, and poſſeſs'd of an ample fortune——enough to bribe twenty ſuch women as you to impriſon half London: Therefore hear me: You know me not—I am not the perſon you ſhould have. But tell me who employs you to keep the lady you mean to do—with her name and the whole affair—tell it me directly, and I will reward you handſomely.

I ſaw ſhe was much ſtagger'd at this—but recovering her ſurprize,

Go—go—I ſay, I have ſomething elſe to do than to ſpend my time in talking to a mad thing.

Here, woman: *(drawing off my glove, and taking a ſmall diamond ring off my finger)* Here is a ring of great value—*(her eyes ſparkled at the word)* I pledge this as a token of what I promiſe—Anſwer me directly—

Why to be ſure if——

No ifs——An anſwer directly.

If, as I was ſaying, you are not the lady ——Why you ſhall go——but then the money——you know——

Not ſo faſt——Go, I won't, unleſs you tell me the man——Who is he? Who was you to keep? Never fear my generoſity—— Mr. who?——You ſee this ring——

His name is Edgerton.

And I you take to be his wife?

Yes, Madam.

What was you to do with me? How long to keep me?

During his pleaſure: till I had recovered you of your diſorder.

My madneſs?

Yes, Madam. But I can't ſay you ſeem at all that way inclined——

Very

Very good. And when is Mr. Edgerton to call on you?

Next week.

For what purpoſe?

To make me my firſt payment, and give directions concerning you.

Now attend to me. Follow my directions, and you ſhall find me as good as my word.

Before I proceed any further—The ring, Madam!

There it is. I ſhall leave you directly, and when Mr. Edgerton calls on you, tell him I am very ill; and if he ſhould unexpectedly aſk to ſee me, put it off, and let him know, that I am in a very bad way—— Receive your pay of him, and put it in your pocket. But on no account——

I will obey your orders to a tittle.

Let the deceit tranſpire. I would not on any account have you blunder in executing theſe inſtructions. I am well acquainted

with Mr. Edgerton, though not his wife, and well able to reward you handſomely, if you carry on the plot dextrouſly.

But, Madam——you forget yourſelf—his wife is at liberty, and will be ſeen by him poſſibly in two days; then——

Never fear. I know her well, and will anſwer for it that ſhe ſhall be well concealed.

If poſſible then it ſhall be done.

If poſſible, is no anſwer to me. Surely you ſee it is your own intereſt to chime in with my ſchemes—Mr. Edgerton pays you as uſual for keeping and *curing* his wife—— and I will (obſerve me) reward you, if I find you manage the matter as I direct. What is your name?

You muſt excuſe me there, Madam.

Well then, give me a direction to ſome friend—that will, on occaſion, receive money for your uſe, that you can depend on.—— And as I find you keep Mr. Edgerton ignorant of the truth, for I ſee him every week,

I will

I will now and then ſend you a few guineas as a reward.——But if once you let him diſcover it, then expect no more from me.

Depend upon me for managing it to your mind.

Further; With ſome money, I ſhall ſome time hence ſend you an order to acquaint him the next time he calls, that his wife is dead, and aſk his inſtructions what you are to do with her? Whether he would not have her buried as one of your family? And if he ſays Yes, then report again to him that the buſineſs is done, and demand your laſt reward.

If your ladyſhip will leave a letter, or any parcel, directed for A. B. with a croſs mark under it, at Mr. Thompſon's, Glover, in May-fair, it will come ſafe to me, though he knows me not.

Can I depend on your performing what I have required?

You may indeed.

Don't imagine you can deceive me, for I ſhall know at once either by Mr. Edgerton

or his wife, if you have betrayed me, or blundered it out.

Mr. Edgerton will be ſatisfied with half a word, Madam, and will never demand a ſight of his wife: There will be no difficulty in the affair at all.

Remember your own intereſt on both ſides is at ſtake.

Never fear me, Madam. If your ladyſhip pleaſes, I will order a coach——but, Madam, you muſt ſubmit to go with a man.

Very well: I will go now.

The coach was at the door in about an hour, with a fellow ready for my guard. They ſet me down in a ſtreet I knew not—but I walked ſome way, and found a ſtand of chairs, when getting into one, I ordered them to carry me to my father's—and moſt agreeably found the family in no alarm, no whiſking the footmen here, there, and every where after me; my father was ſurprized at my ſtaying ſo very late——for it was near morning: but I told him an accident had hap-

happened, which obliged me to call on Mrs. Edgerton, and I could not for a great while get a chair to come from her lodgings home.

This morning I walked to Mrs. Edgerton; related the whole affair, and begged of her to conceal herſelf by all means till we could make ſomething of the adventure—— I told her my plan was to wait till Mr. Edgerton was informed of her pretended death, and then obſerve him well, when twenty to one but we ſhould catch him: But as this would require ſome time, the difficulty was, to know what to do in the mean time. At laſt ſhe thought of her aunt Williams, who lived in Devonſhire; ſaid ſhe would write to her to invite herſelf to her houſe for a month or two; and in the mean time keep herſelf very cloſe. I begged of her to give abſolute orders to the woman of the houſe ſhe lodged in, to tell every body that called, that ſhe had not returned home from laſt night's Opera, to her great ſurprize. Having managed matters thus far, I have

nothing to do but to watch Mr. Edgerton narrowly, which I have a good opportunity of doing at Mrs. Duncomb's, where I can meet him at any time, and receive the proper intelligence from my friend, the mad-houſe lady.

Now, my Harriet, have I not conducted this adventure moſt bewitchingly? Some whining miſſes would have fairly been paſs'd off to the other world as a mad creature—— but by exerting a little ſpirit, you ſee how I extricated myſelf, and turned the ſnares of the vile fellow on himſelf; and little doubt do I make, but we ſhall catch him moſt horribly. Mrs. Edgerton is fully convinced, that his intention was to confine her for life —or very poſſibly to ſhorten it by means of that infernal devil. I ſhould have no dependence on ſuch a creature, did I not hold her by her intereſt in ſo double a manner, that I think we are perfectly ſafe. And ſhe cannot re-ſell me to Mr. Edgerton, for that would ſhow him at once that ſhe is not to be truſted—and beſides, would loſe her conſtant pay from him. If Mrs, Edgerton manages her

her part well in keeping entirely concealed, I have no idea but his cash will fly to make himself a gull to his own villainy.

Adieu, my dearest.

I remain ever your's,

C. Hervey.

LETTER X.

Mr. EDGERTON to Colonel FORRESTER.

I HAVE followed your advice to a hair: She is ſecured in Mrs. Gooches clutches, who ſwears that I ſhall never more be troubled with her. This is hot work, and if your propheſies do not take place, will be in vain: but by Jupiter I am come to that paſs, that they muſt, or ſhe might as well give me a doſe of madneſs. Edwards did the buſineſs like a fellow that underſtands it—He contrived to have Miſs Hervey's coach out of the way, with whom ſhe went to the Opera, fixed a chair at their very noſes, and two of his people, with ſome footmen of their acquaintance, almoſt mobbed them with their crouding and flambeaux: the bait took, they whipped into the chairs, and my chick was fairly brought off to a coach that waited in a by-place, and was with dear Mrs. Gooch in a trice. She made a deſperate rout,

rout, pretended not to be married, threatned, ſcolded, laughed, cry'd, and all in a minute, but they preſently dragg'd her to the dungeon —and began the courſe of phyſick; and the old devil aſſures me I need be under *no apprehenſions*.

You are a fellow of admirable intelligence: I took your hint, and made the enquiries after that country lout the Buckinghamſhire 'Squire with his rich niece: As you ſuppoſed, a moſt abominable bruin, ſpecially calculated for being made a fool of. If I could ſucceed there the matter would do —but I have horrible horrors at a failure, for my damn'd creditors grow intolerably clamorous—and, Heaven knows, Charles, that nothing but a run of luck the other night ſtopp'd their mouths with a ſugar-plum *in preſente*.

I will ſet every engine to work the wit of man can deviſe, to gull this old dog and his niece, and muſt and will ſucceed ——Mother Gooch is all obedient; I have no fears from that quarter——and let me aſſure you——no qualms.

qualms.——No:——whatever be my fate, you ſhall not have it in your power to laugh at me for milkineſs of blood——I will ſhew myſelf worthy your friendſhip, and if I do not ſucceed, baniſh from my ſoul all that's human in me——Oh! what a thought!——Zounds, Charles, give me your good wiſhes—It muſt do——I will cut their throats, if old Bruin will not hang his eſtate about his niece's neck, and beg me to take it.

You talk nobly of revenge——and Heaven grant ſucceſs to your's.——'Tis truly a conduct worthy a man of ſpirit—and preciſely for that reaſon all men of true ſpirit are highly revengeful.——Tenacious of their honour, they determine that no mortal ſhall offend them with impunity. The Anger of Achilles ſhould have been called the Revenge of Achilles.——All great ſouls feel this ſpirit boil within them on an injury of any kind.—You time it well: This Fair American of his is miſtreſs of his whole ſoul, there is the ſpot—there the mortal heel——ſtrike there, and you are revenged! Adieu.

R. EDGERTON.

LETTER XI.

Sir Philip CHETWYN to Colonel FORRESTER.

I Received your moſt obliging letter, my friend, and believe me when I aſſure you that nothing could give me more pleaſure, than the polite and expreſſive terms in which you congratulate my good fortune, and offer me your ſervices. At preſent I have no occaſion to trouble any one, as the whole circle of my concerns is bounded by theſe charming woods;—all that Heaven has formed beautiful and elegant is confined to this ſweet ſpot.

I told you in my laſt that my charming, innocent Emmera, was greatly alarmed at a hint I dropped of moving her from her retirement; and that I had pacified her by promiſing not to do it contrary to her inclinations, and by beginning to live with her in the native ſimplicity of all her rural occupations.

Juſt

Juſt Heaven! What an enchantment does love throw over every action, every ſentiment of life, and renders that moſt agreeable this minute, which was the moſt diſguſtful the laſt.

Our life is a buſy round of a great variety of occupations, all tending to health and chearfulneſs—intermixed with converſations ſo original and amazingly pleaſing on the part of my charmer, that I have not paſs'd one tedious moment theſe ſix weeks. We riſe every day with the ſun, and in the fine cool of the morning, employ ourſelves in buſineſs which requires ſome ſtrength. The garden takes up much of our time. It is planted in a pretty taſte with a variety of fruit-trees; theſe my Emmera prunes. That part of it which is occupied by kitchen ſtuff is a plot of about half an acre, the beans, peas, parſnips, carrots, potatoes, &c. all planted in rows at ſome diſtance from each other for the conveniency of plowing between them, which is a great ſaving of digging; and would you believe it, Charles, I yoke a pair of oxen

every day or two, for the purpoſe of plowing between the rows of kitchen vegetables, and the wheat in our incloſures: My Emmera tells me, her father learned the method of ſowing in rows in England, and that it is a little practiſed there for corn *(I never beheld it there)*; he told her the advantage of it was, that the plowing in the ſpaces, prepared a ſtripe of ground for next year's rows like a fallow, and at the ſame time, greatly promoted the growth of the preſent crop. This ſtands to reaſon; and I ſee it exemplified in our own farm. I never beheld finer wheat; and my Emmera is ſo clean a weeder, not one is to be ſeen among the corn, &c. in the rows. She conſtantly weeds while I plow.

After this labour is done, I bring up the cows from ſome beautiful paſtures encloſed by the old man. The natural breed of this country is extremely fine, and require no other trouble, but to be drove from the woods while young, and bred up in a domeſtic

meſtic manner. This heaven-born maid milks them regularly, and performs all the little offices of the dairy with inimitable neatneſs——I may ſay elegance. Oh! Charles! envy me the delicious repaſts we make from this dairy. Breakfaſt then follows——no ſtated place——for if the morning proves hot, we frequently take it in a pretty little boat, on a ſmall but moſt romantic creek from the lake, within a quarter of a mile of the houſe. We caſt anchor under the ſpreading branches of beech trees, hanging from a fine bold ſhore, cloſe over the water, a thouſand pictureſque objects in view all around. Sweet and delicious ſcenes!——Never——never will your warm impreſſion be effaced from my retentive imagination!——The very heat of the day is paſſed either in the houſe, or ſome arbour of Emmera's raiſing, of which there are ſeveral, or in the boat: She works (no ſuperfluities of gewgaw vanity) and I read to her out of ſome few books her father brought here with him.

Plutarch,

Plutarch, the Spectator, and Milton are ſtanding books with us. Dinner is generally taken in the houſe. In the afternoon we read and work; inſtead of tea ſhe has an infuſion of an herb gathered by herſelf; ſhe tried ſeveral, when ſome tea brought by the father was done, and at laſt fixed on one which is really very pleaſant. We uſe honey inſtead of ſugar. In the evening I take to my tools, and labour again, either hoeing, digging, chopping wood againſt winter *(mark that)* or any work of the ſeaſon that is neceſſary. Such generally is the round of the day, with variations however, and of them not a few, ſuch as fiſhing, &c.——Inſipid enough, you'll ſay. So ſhould I once have thought; but, good Heaven! what a change!

Methinks I hear you ſay—'Tis pretty play enough juſt whilſt the fit laſts—To have ſo fine an opportunity with the girl you love! So much time for courting! No rivals!—— But prithee, Phil. don't make an American fool of yourſelf—but bring her away.—I think myſelf the happieſt of mankind to have

this opportunity—and moſt deſperately in love with her I am. Pray Heaven I may be able to make an impreſſion on her heart; but as to removing her from this ſweet retirement —it all depends on her own will: Her power over me is abſolute: Let her but ſpeak the word—and I remain here her ſlave for ever.

The aſtoniſhing awe and reverence I have for the native innocence and ſimplicity of this angelic creature, works ſo powerfully with me, that, ſo far am I from harbouring a thought injurious to her honour, I dare not explain the ſituation of my mind to her; the words, *I love you*, are for ever quivering on my tongue—but I tremble too much to drop them. Thank Heaven ſhe ſeems to think herſelf very happy in having me with her—and, except in ſeveral melancholy moments when the memory of her dear father breaks upon her mind, ſhe is chearful and happy—perſues her little buſineſs the whole day with pleaſure, always converſing with me—but, to my amazement, makes no enquiries about the world: She is delighted

when

when I perform my work dexterouſly; likes much to have me read to her, and makes many remarks which would entertain a fellow of your underſtanding——Genuine nature!

One morning, as I was taking a walk down to the creek to enjoy the delicious freſhneſs of the air—I ſaw her come from the houſe——"Oh! ſaid ſhe, Mr. ——— But what is your name? I am often going to call you Mr. ſomething, but never thought to aſk it.

My name is Chetwyn, my fair Emmera. What may your ſurname be?

Why really I don't know——What my poor father's reaſons were I know not; but he never would tell me. He often put by the queſtion——ſaying, What does that ſignify?——never mind——Emmera is enough. But, Mr. Chetwyn, we will ſpend to day in the grove, and eat in the little pavilion.—

The what?——my Emmera!——

You ſhall ſee——But firſt let us load the boat for our little voyage;——we will take

proviſions for the day, and a book for part of the entertainment.

Did I never ſee this grove and pavilion?

Never.

I returned to the houſe, and helped her to pack a baſket with ſome trifles for the day's repaſt, with our fiſhing-tackle——and taking Milton in my pocket, we ſet off for the boat. I rowed a little way up the creek, till we came to the mouth of a ſmall river, into which Emmera directed me to guide the boat. In about half an hour the ſtream grew ſo narrow that I could not uſe the oars, but was forced to puſh the boat along with one of them againſt the banks; the trees and underwood which grew along the brook, ſo arched it over, that we could ſcarce ſee more than a glimmering of the ſun through the almoſt impervious ſhade. It was exceſſively romantic and pretty: The courſe of the brook gently winding in ſome places, let us look forward to ſome diſtance through the bending irregular arch of wood, which, juſt letting

letting the rays of the ſun twinkle on the undulating water, had a fine and moſt picturesque effect. Now and then we caught a break in the wood that ſurrounded us, which gave us by contraſt an agreeable ſurprize: The country was rocky and mountainous. I puſhed on highly delighted with the romantic ſcene near an hour, when the brook contracted its banks more than before; and I could ſcarce make my way for buſhes and brambles that hung quite into the boat: I began to complain.

My dear Emmerá, ſure you have miſtaken the way? This grows a horrid place.——

Oh! fie! Have courage, Mr. Chetwyn. ——I have guided the boat here myſelf.

How much further is this ſame grove?

Not above a mile; if I have not loſt the way.——

That you certainly have——we had better turn back——this buſhy, pricking ditch, can lead to nothing.

No——no; go on——I ſhall ſoon ſee whether I am come right or not.

On I ſhoved through an army of buſhes, which had not Emmera been ſkilful, would have tore her eyes out. I ſoon cried out again for turning back; but ſtill On was the word: And thus it continued for I believe hear half another hour, without one moment's day light. At laſt, after a few minutes of more than ordinary ſtruggle through briars and brambles, we ſuddenly broke upon an opening, which threw before my aſtoniſhed eyes a ſmall but moſt exquiſite valley—— ſurrounded on every ſide except the brook, by an amphitheatre of mountains, thickly covered with a vaſt variety of trees. This ſtriking little valley ſeemed ſcooped from out the body of a vaſt woody mountain, and painted with the freſheſt verdure I ever beheld. On one ſide ſtood, half ſhaded with trees hanging from the mountain's ſide, a light elegant pavilion, apparently of white marble, which I could have ſworn had been rais'd by magic, ſuch a contraſt was it to every thing my eyes had ſo long beheld. Oppoſite to it a ſmall caſcade broke from the moun-

mountain in ſeveral irregular ſheets of tranſparent water——in one place hid——in another glittering through an embrowning canopy of wood, and forming a ſcene delightful beyond all imagination. Its ſtream compoſed a baſon in the midſt of the valley, which reflected all the beauties of this enchanting ſpot. I am a fool for attempting to deſcribe what could ſcarcely be expreſſed by the pencil of a Claud Loraine. The moment this delicious landſkip broke on my eye, the oar dropt from my hand—I ſtood mute for ſome minutes like a ſtatue.

Well, cries Emmera, Is not this worth coming to? But, Mr. Chetwyn, you wanted to go back—you regretted a few buſhes.—

My fair Emmera, you are a deity—you are not what you ſeem—thou art the enchantreſs who ſpreads a picture to my eye, which can have no reality in nature.—Let me feel your hand—ſure thou art all air!—

Air indeed!—No, no, let us land, and I will ſhow you I am not made of air—for I

am quite hungry, you have managed the boat ſo unſkilfully.

Aſhore we went, and faſtening our boat, walked to the pavilion: Emmera opened a door at one end of it, which let us into a ſmall, neat room behind it: It was deſigned for containing a few conveniencies when ſhe and her father came to this ſweet ſpot.—My dear Emmera, what could be your reaſon for not letting me know before of this charming place?

That when you had the pleaſure, it might appear the greater. What raptures you are in! Had I deſcribed it to you, it would not have figured thus. It came upon you unexpectedly, and the contraſt between ſo pretty a ſpot, and the diſagreeable road to it, heightens all its charms infinitely—There is nothing but the pavilion here ſo exceeding beautiful as to eclipſe all our other landſkips—but the contraſt gives infinite advantages.

Nothing can be more juſt than your obſervation: But why did you not bring me here before?

My

My father never made too free with this little hermitage, as he uſed to call it; the houſe, he ſaid, was a buſy ſcene;—this a retired one: But only on particular occaſions ſpent a day here. This management made it yet more agreeable. Our viſits were ſo few, that we were never tired. Our birth-days, and my mother's, who died while I was young, we always celebrated here; alſo my father's wedding-day—and the anniverſary of his arriving at his retirement, is a great jubilee. Your birth-day we will add to the liſt.

My charming Emmera! your management delights me. This really is taking a trip to Heaven.

Make it as heavenly as you can, by preſerving your mind in a ſtate as agreeable as poſſible. To-day we will think of nothing but what is pleaſing, that the harmony within us may keep pace with the paradiſe without. See how bright the ſun ſhines—how exquiſite are theſe magnolia's—can any thing be more fragrant than thoſe roſes! ——All planted by my father and me.——

Fear

Fear not, my lovely queen of this fair paradiſe, that one ſingle thought to mar my joy can come acroſs my mind to day. Oh! my Emmera! I never am in your company, but my ſoul's in heaven——I ſeem to tread on air——and all is pleaſure and delight.——

No European compliments, *(bluſhing)* Mr. Chetwyn; plain, ſincere language is only fit for a hermitage——you are in no court——you muſt leave your ideas behind you.——But come, 'tis time for breakfaſt—we will have it under yon magnolia near the caſcade. ——Will you take theſe things?——

Emmera had provided nothing of the common ſort; the nectarines ſhe had gathered from a tree that always bore fruit of a moſt delicious flavour: the butter was exquiſite; the cows had been turned into a plantation of lucern on purpoſe for this occaſion: The bread was made of the very fineſt wheat: The green turf was our cloth and table; and the ſeaſoning of our repaſt,

'The feaſt of reaſon, and the flow of ſoul.'

On

On the part of my Emmera, genuine reaſon! ſhining forth with all the mild radiance of untainted purity!

Is not this, Mr. Chetwyn, a moſt delicious breakfaſt?

Delicious indeed! It is a treat fit for Paradiſe alone.

And do you really think that the plain ſimplicity of this meal atones for the want of the refinements you are uſed to?

Aye; and ten thouſand times exceeds them.

I muſt think that extraordinary; for habit has ſo great an influence on the mind, that ſo ſudden and total a change can ſcarcely be agreeable. And yet why ſhould you diſſemble?—I know you muſt often be very melancholy at loſing the company of your friends—but to-day—you muſt forget them.

Indeed, Emmera, you wrong me there. Since firſt I ſaw you, I have not paſſed one melancholy hour.

That is very ſtrange. A woman, whoſe ideas muſt be ſo very circumſcribed as mine, can

can be but poor company for a man ſo uſed to the world as you.

Not knowing the world, my fair friend, you know but little of yourſelf in the compariſon. Your father! how much I reverence his memory! To give you all the knowledge neceſſary to grace your mind, and extend your ideas of the uſeful and the beautiful, far beyond the train of moſt European ladies. 'Tis impoſſible, my Emmera, that I ſhould regret ſociety and the world, while I enjoy all that is valuable in them in your converſation.

Do not miſtake me, Mr. Chetwyn: I am far from valuing either the world or its ſociety—but I think it wonderful, that a man ſo uſed to both ſhould at all reliſh ſuch a retirement as this. But I am clearly of opinion, while in the world you never was ſo free from diſguſts and diſappointments as you have been ſince ſecluded from it.

True, my Emmera; and you may add, that I never was half ſo happy.

From

From my idea of ſociety, I ſhould think it ſcarce poſſible even to enjoy ſuch a ſcheme as this: Some relation, friend or acquaintance will be of the party, who, twenty to one, mars it. And nothing can be more natural; for, coming warm from the world, with all its variety of intereſts and prejudices in their heads, is it to be wondered at, that true genuine good humour ſhould not have the rule a ſingle day? I ſhould think it a miracle if it had.

Nothing in nature can be juſter than your idea of that world you are ſo happy as to have no connections with.

And yet there is one thing which ſeems to contradict the truth of that idea.——

And what may that be?

Why your conduct of late. You have lately ſeemed reconciled to retirement; and I think do not regret leaving the world. Now the poſſibility of this appeared to me a contradiction.

My charming Emmera, you have no juſt idea of your own perfections: Not one

woman

woman in ten millions could have made ſo ſolitary a ſpot in the leaſt agreeable to me.—No other woman upon earth could have rendered it *ſo* agreeable. But an underſtanding which exalts you above the common rank—a delicacy of taſte and ſentiment I never met with before—and a genuine ſimplicity of ſoul which is its greateſt ornament, make this place dear to me, becauſe it is connected with you.

Oh! Mr. Chetwyn, *(bluſhing)* I can never deſerve ſuch compliments—they ſuit not with the hermitage; remember where we are.

By Heavens! they are no compliments: Nothing but the real opinion I cannot but entertain of you.

Come, Sir—ſurely we have had breakfaſt enough?—We have to catch ſome tench out of this baſon for dinner. Nothing but rarities, you ſee, at the hermitage. My father ſtocked the baſon with ſome fine ones he took in the river, and made it a rule never to eat of them but on theſe little feſtivals.

We

We dined in the pavilion: The fiſh exquiſite; and the repaſt concluded with a bottle of admirable wine of her own making, from a little vineyard of her father's planting.

In the afternoon we ſtrolled about, admiring with rapture the woody beauties of our little valley. I obſerved, that there was no ſingle entrance into it but the little ſtream by which we came. Emmera aſked me, if it would be agreeable to ſpend an hour or two in trimming up the jeſſamins, honeyſuckles and roſes, which formed the almoſt natural arbours ſhe had made with their entwining branches; a little labour which her father and ſhe had always partook of when they came here. This employment, with ſweet converſe, held till the time for tea, when ſhe told me, ſhe had yet another rarity. —"To-day you ſhall have a diſh of real tea—When our ſtock grew low, we never indulged ourſelves in it, but at the hermitage. —There are a few makings left—one of them for to-day."

We drank it under one of my Emmera's bowers, in other words, under a thouſand branches of moſt fragrant jeſſamins, hanging in beautiful feſtoons around us.—Never was any thing more delicious. What tea! ſeldom taſted—how agreeable the flavour—made by my Emmera! Heavens! that I ſhould never enjoy a tea-drinking till this moment!

"My Emmera, before we ſtir I will read you a paſſage in Milton."

With all my heart, Mr. Chetwyn: That divine poem is one continued beauty. He is *my* favourite, I aſſure you.

How beautiful is this fourth book! The ideas it recalls to my mind are ſuch, as my preſent charming ſituation gilds with more than common luſtre. What a ſweet taſte for deſcription had this great man!

Another ſide, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool receſs, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; mean while murm'ring waters fall
Down the ſlope hills, diſpers'd, or in a lake,

That

That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her cryſtal mirror holds, unite their ſtreams.

This is the very ſpot! Hearken to the caſcade! ſee its irriguous ſtream!

The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the ſmell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while univerſal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Led on th' eternal ſpring———

Is not this infinitely pretty, Emmera?

Charming indeed. Surely, Mr. Chetwyn, there are but few poets that have ſo fine a manner of deſcribing the beauties of nature: My father was infinitely fond of theſe paſſages in Milton, and I think had there been any other whoſe works were equal, would have brought them with him to his retirement.

None, my fair Emmera, that come near to this immortal man.

And going on till I came to the deſcription of Adam and Eve—and that line,

For ſoftneſs ſhe and ſweet attractive grace—

I gently preſſed her hand to my lips——"My dear Emmera! did ever woman but you deſerve that epithet?"——She bluſh'd, and only ſaid, Don't compliment, Mr. Chetwyn.——

Under a tuft of ſhade that on a green
Stood whiſp'ring ſoft, by a freſh fountain ſide
They ſat them down;——

How like our own ſituation, my Eve! What exquiſite pleaſure is there in *feeling* the force of ſuch paſſages as theſe!

——and after no more toil
Of their ſweet gard'ning labour than ſuffic'd
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made eaſe
More eaſy, wholſome thirſt and appetite
More grateful, to their ſupper fruits they fell,
Nectarin fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, ſide-long as they ſat recline
On the ſoft downy bank damaſk'd with flowers:

Oh! my Emmera! that in the inventive imagination of a poet, we ſhould ſee our own bliſsful ſtate painted to ſuch truth!

Oh!

Oh! fie, you European!—Do you really think it bliſsful?

By heavens I do.

Why then did you talk of taking me hence?

I was ridiculouſly mad. I will live for ever with you in this ſweet ſolitude. Shall I not?——But hear how he goes on.

The ſavory pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still as they thirſted ſcoop the brimming ſtream;
Nor gentle purpoſe, nor endearing ſmiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beſeems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they———

I fell upon my knees before the dear divinity of my ſoul, and claſping her hand in mine, kiſs'd it with rapture, and bedewed it with my tears. Oh! Emmera! my Emmera! Why have you not the ſoul to—to—alas!—

I looked up, and beheld a ſweet tear trickle from the eye of my charmer, while ſhe caſt a look upward, as if pouring forth an ejaculation to heaven as her guide. Good God!

what were the feelings of my ſoul, at the ſight of that angelic countenance! I exiſted for ſome moments in the regions of the bleſſed—all joy—all delirium—for I knew not what.

Emmera!

Come, Sir—no more.—I did not expect to have drank the cup of ſorrow in this hitherto happy ſpot of innocent feſtivity. Oh! Mr. Chetwyn, you are fit only for the world. I was deceived in you.

The cup of ſorrow! What means my angel?

Rather ſay, what means this language?—Whither tends this behaviour?—Oh! Sir!—Remember my dear father's laſt words. Do not—do not ſeek to ruin her you found, at leaſt ſo innocent!

Heavens, Madam!—you wrong me in that word. I'd rather ſtrike a dagger to my ſoul, than for one moment entertain a thought injurious to your honour.

I do believe you mean it not—but do not blind yourſelf with the vain ſophiſtry of a deceiving

deceiving world, which ruſhes into that it ſeems to ſhun: Think of our ſituation!—more wretched than the world, if wanting innocence: Think of an orphan uſed to the converſe of paternal tenderneſs, and then the dreary, lone inhabitant of endleſs woods! So helpleſs, and expoſed to melancholy thoughts, ſhould you appear to plunge her ſoul in grief, and rob that boſom of its only peace, which knew not of remorſe!——

Enough; thou faireſt image of more than human excellence! Since you ſuſpect the purity of my thoughts, I'll bury them in the receſſes of my ſoul; nor e'er give utterance to that more than adoration, in which for ever I muſt hold your virtues. 'Tis in the ſun-ſhine of your eye that I alone exiſt. Caſt not a ſhade upon your beams!—Oh! Emmera! the dew of heaven falls down in bleſſings on mankind, yet knows of them no more!

I'm ſatisfied. I ſee that virtue is my guard—and therefore know no fear. United in

the ſtrongeſt bands of friendſhip and eſteem —happy in our little, ſolitary ſociety—whither ſhould we wander for greater bleſſings! Serenity of ſoul is ours. Oh! Mr. Chetwyn, I would not change this life I lead with you, to ſtep with ſplendor to an envy'd throne!

Ah! my faireſt Emmera!—But if freſh objects of unknown merit were to appear—is it only me you——

Oh! let me break that ſentence, that moſt injurious hint; ſo European—ſo little ſuited to the ſimplicity of *my* mind!—No, Sir—reſt ſatisfied, while *you* remain what now you ſeem, 'tis only you with whom I'd live.

Here then to Heaven I'll bend——Oh! Gracious God! give me the power of treating this faireſt of your fair creation, with never-ending reſpect. Let me perpetually honour the native purity of her ſoul—and never in thought, word or deed, act towards her, but with the moſt upright, virtuous intentions. Through thy eternal mercy grant me this prayer; thou knoweſt I make it in all ſincerity of ſoul!

Come,

Come, thou bleſſed pattern of all genuine excellence, truſt me as the keeper of your honour—you ſhall not, with heaven's aſſiſtance, find me unworthy.

I do moſt religiouſly truſt you.——On you—you only, I entirely depend, for all earthly happineſs.

* * * *

Grant you patience to go to the end of this, to you, tedious journal; I think it cannot be otherwiſe, and yet you ſee I am about to make ſome ſmall addition to it.

We left the hermitage (by the bye I believe I never told you, that the pavilion was entirely of her father's raiſing, and the pillars of his own carving) in perfect ſerenity of mind, and that good opinion which each had of the other greatly improved. My dear Emmera had a certain tender melancholy which heightened every charm, and I think never ſeemed to breathe in a more perfect degree that ſoft gale of tranquillity, which wafts the ſoul upon the wings of love, and

lulls it in Elyſium.——I know not how to expreſs that more than human ſerenity ſo mixed with chearfulneſs, and that gilding of the mind——that ſun-ſhine of the ſoul—which never exiſts with mirth, but in mild effective beams diffuſes its ſweet influence.

We returned to our regular courſe of life, and that happy day then ſeemed half an age—our imaginations magnified the little incidents of it, and we could ſcarce believe, that the bounds of a ſingle day ſhould contain ſuch a variety as then was pictured in our memories.

I know not what may be your opinion of the matter, but I ſhall ever eſteem myſelf peculiarly happy in meeting, ſo circumſtanced, with the moſt truly amiable woman in the univerſe. Never ſhall I be weary of this ſolitary ſpot, while it is enlivened with all that fancy can imagine charming. I am quite a convert to retirement, and moſt ſincerely aſſure you, that I find more pleaſure in the menial offices I perform here, than in the gayeſt and moſt glittering periods of my life. The moſt laborious employments, the

moſt

moſt trifling actions—even the very minutiæ of an inconſiderable farm, take here a cloathing of entertainment and elegance: It is impoſſible to expreſs the more than human grace this ſweet creature throws on the ſlighteſt actions——What ſtriking turns of ſentiment every thing gives riſe to——What a taſte for the juſt and beautiful diſplays itſelf in all her remarks!——To whom would not ſuch a woman render ſolitude agreeable! And let me further add; I find my preſent life wonderous healthy; for from my cradle to this hour, never did I enjoy ſuch an uninterrupted ſtate of perfect health.

Adieu, my friend: In the next packet I leave behind the mountain, you ſhall not be forgot: No body has yet troubled me; I have again charged my ſiſter on no account to diſturb my repoſe, by any impertinent meſſenger. I have threatened to piſtol the firſt European face I behold within the limits of this retirement.

P. CHETWYN.

LETTER XII.

Miſs HERVEY to Miſs CHETWYN.

INDEED, my Harriet, you never diſplayed your judgment leſs than when you begged of me to employ all my vacant hours in ſcribbling to you whatever came uppermoſt. Oh! what a lively pen ought that to be, ſo truſted to run riot with unbounded wildneſs—In good faith, enough to overturn the reaſon of the reader, and render his imagination, if he is attentive to ſtuff, a very phantaſtic mirror of abſurdity—Let me ſee—hum—ſpecial ſenſe that!—this letter begins charmingly—how 'twill end, Heaven——

* * * *

—Oh! the plague of aunts! Harriet, if you were teazed with them as I am, you'd — Madam Grainger, and her ſweet ſiſter Mrs. Copping, dined with us to-day, and interrupted a fine tale I was going to tell you—inſtead of which, I have been quite pickled, fry'd and

and fricaſee'd in religion. You know with what zealous eloquence they harangue on that ſubject, and how eager they are to have every body elſe join in the converſation, which, however, they cannot do without incurring moſt terrible denunciations of divine vengeance on the leaſt difference of opinion. They were diſputing what would be the event of ſomething very diſtant——

Dear, ſaid I, what matters how it will be? Five hundred years hence the world will know enough of it.

There—now,——replied Mrs. Copping; you ſee how much ſhe reads the ſcriptures!

La', Madam!—How?—What?——

Why, child, how ignorant you are not to know that the world will be at an end in about three hundred years. How therefore ſhould it five hundred years hence know any thing of that matter?

The world at an end in three hundred years! Dear Madam!—where do you find that?

Aye, now! See there! adds Mrs. Grainger, that's the common cant——"Where do you find that?"——and——"Who told you that?"——and ſuch interjections of contempt is all you meet with now-a-days. But, ſiſter Copping, you know, I think, that's a diſputed point.

No diſputed point, indeed. But are we not told *that day will come like a thief in the night——The one ſhall be taken, the other left.* And ſo it will be:——and *then* let me ſee whether they'll cry out, "Where do you find that, pray?"——and "Who told you that?"

But, dear aunt, don't put yourſelf in ſuch a paſſion; I only aſked *for information* where it was to be found?

Where it was to be found truly! Why it is to be found in the Revelations.

The Revelations!

Aye, to be ſure.——See there now——Peck at that too, I hope. The Revelations!

I ſup-

I ſuppoſe, aunt, you underſtand all the Revelations—And ſo you interpret the end of the world from the Revelations?

Yes, I do, and many learned men are of the ſame opinion. There's Dr. Mead, and Dr. Hen. More, and Dr. Thomas——

Dear ſiſter Copping—you forget yourſelf; Dr. Hen. More was of a different opinion.

Siſter Grainger, you are miſtaken. I ſay Dr.——

I proteſt, ſiſter Copping, you forget. I do inſiſt——

Siſter Grainger, you may inſiſt what you will—you know how much I read——

I care not what you read, ſiſter Copping:—you ſhould know better what you read before you contradict other people. I ſay——

I ſay, 'tis no ſuch thing——

I ſay, you ſay wrong——you——you're furious——

Furious truly!—You are ignorance itſelf; 'tis Dr. More——

'Tis Dr. Mead——

Ridi-

Ridiculous creature!

Obſtinate fool! I'll leave the room, I won't keep your company—you'll be a Deiſt ſoon!—*Away ſhe flew in a paſſion.*

Now do not imagine, my dear grave Harriet, that I write this in ridicule of religion—far from it; and I aſſure you moſt faithfully every ſyllable paſſed. I am not one that takes a pleaſure in laughing at every thing I do not underſtand: But it would be ſtupidity itſelf to be preſent at ſuch ridiculous ſcenes without feeling the abſurdity of them. It is a ſad misfortune, that any thing of ſuch great and real importance to mankind as religion, ſhould ever become the favourite ſtudy and topic of people whoſe ſtriking characteriſtics are ignorance and bigotry: I do not by *ignorance*, mean an immediate want of ſuperficial knowledge of the ſcriptures and ſome commentaries on them, but a want of that enlarged and comprehenſive idea of humanity in general, and that diſtinguiſhing perſpicuity of apprehenſion which gives a proper application to the duties of religion in

in particular. This true knowledge embraces the whole univerſe, conceives from the holy writings great and juſt notions of the Deity and his providence, but does not harp for ever on the very letter of the goſpel; nor, by a ridiculous pretence of expounding myſterious expreſſions, and explaining inexplicable figures, render thoſe things trivial and ridiculous, which ought to be held in reverence, although beyond our apprehenſion.—How removed from theſe are my two good aunts!

Have I not made up now, my Harriet, for the little jocoſeneſs I began with? I think I have hit your taſte off exactly.

* * * *

The bait I threw out takes with that villain Edgerton, as I could wiſh. He has, by ſome management or other, become acquainted, through the Duncombes, with an old Buckinghamſhire 'Squire, rich, and a niece ſtill richer, with no other relations I hear. I believe he managed ſome how or other to get Mrs. Duncombe acquainted with him—though

though ſhe knows a little of him in the country. But the cream of the jeſt is, he is violently tender to Miſs; but though I once met them together, could ſee nothing of it, my gentleman is too cautious for that. He perfectly makes love to the old man, and is hail fellow well met with him—though his utmoſt idea does not ſeem to reach beyond a horſe and a five-barr'd gate. Miſs is quite a country piece, but ſhows forth for a lady of faſhion——and thinks ſhe has both taſte and wit. Their name is Carter.

I cannot help being ſo miſchievous as to enjoy the idea of Edgerton's moſt horrid confuſion, when I preſent his wife full to his face——like a baſiliſk, to kill him with a look!——He is ſpecially deceived by the old madhouſe devil, I find, for ſhe informs me, he has called on her three times to know how matters went with his wife, and ſhe told him, worſe and worſe; at which he cried——"That's right——ſo much the better."——There's a dog for you! I meet this

this wretch dreſſed out in all the taſte of finery, bedeck'd with a chearful countenance, and on every occaſion all mirth and vivacity. Theſe men, my Harriet! What are they made of?

But your brother's flame, Miſs Greville! I doubt ſhe has loſt a good card in him, and is now playing a fooliſh game to recover herſelf. She is cloſely beſieged by a young officer in the guards, who ſeems to make ſome way in his approaches, and I believe addreſſes the mother's vanity, as well as the daughter's beauty, elſe ſhe would ſcarcely ſuffer the acquaintance, for they ſay his commiſſion and a few debts or ſo is all his fortune. Woe betide her, if ſhe revenges one man's perfidy by marrying another ſhe knows not!

Well, Harriet, I think I have ſcribbled you a tolerable letter of nothings, till my paper warns me to conclude it with a ſomething—That I ſhall ever remain moſt truly

Your's,

C. HERVEY.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Edgerton to Colonel Forrester.

I Received your's, and am much obliged to you for your advice—It is ſeaſonable and good. In part I had executed your plan with the old fellow—and ſhall take care and proſecute the whole ſcheme. I confeſs now, that your idea of the caſe is more accurate than my own. It was with no great difficulty I brought him acquainted again with Mrs. Duncombe; ſhe is an admirable tool to work with, and by flattering her foppery I may hope for better ſucceſs through her means than by any twenty women in Chriſtendom.

The firſt time the old fellow and his niece med at her houſe, I was of the party; ſhe begg'd me to take the lower end of her table, and do the honours to Mr. Carter. I found he was an intolerable glutton, and therefore I took care to ſupply him well: After dinner

I had him to myſelf, and feeling his pulſe as to the bottle, found him as ſtaunch to that as he was to his knife and fork; I puſh'd the glaſs briſkly to him, till his friendſhip for me grew pretty warm.

Zounds! Mr. Carter, ſaid I, now ſuch a bottle of claret as this, with a dozen more under the ſide-board, would make one's ſoul glad in the country——But as for this London! Blood! man, one muſt only wet our lips here——

Right, Sir, right; the country is the thing—Damn all towns, ſay I.—A rouſing wood fire—a bottle of good wine, and no milk-ſops—Oh! Lord! oh! Lord! Now-a-days—

Aye! in troth now-a-days there's no good doings.——I live moſtly in the country, this is ſuch a milk-ſop town.——

I ſhould like you for a neighbour—Where do you live?

In Cumberland lies my eſtate.

What you're in the Commons, I waunty?

No, Mr. Carter; two or three burroughs there plague me confoundedly to ſtand their Parliament-man, but I will be Knight of the Shire or nought——Three thouſand pounds a year may claim it.

A fine eſtate that.

I make it a rule to live well——Any man, Mr. Carter, may eat himſelf to death at my table, and when he is done, ſwim to heaven: in—burgundy and claret.

Good port——good port is paſſable wine.

True; and I know a tavern here, where is the beſt in England.——

Do ye?——I ſhould like——

Let's have a dinner at it——no ſhilley ſhalley women with us——but eat and drink ——Mum's the word—What ſay ye?——

Adzookers, you're a man after my own ſoul.——

To-morrow ſhall be the day.

Let me ſee: to-morrow——To-morrow I go out of town ſomewhere.

Where?

Where?——I can hardly tell ye where; 'tis to——let me ſee, I have it on a card in my pocket——for they have ſuch outlandiſh names here, that I make Sal write them down, d'ye ſee me; Oh! here 'tis,——To Rome--o and Ju'let——Five o'clock in even.

Odds bobs! Mr. Carter, that's the Play-houſe, Satan's ſchool: Do you go there?—

Sal goes——Mrs. Duncombe will have it ſo.——

Your Sal is a good laſs, if London don't ſpoil her: You ſhould be careful.

A rare girl!——Fifteen hundred a year on day of marriage——A rare girl!

Well married to a *country* gentleman of good eſtate.——

Aye, you're right; no London gentry for me——A fellow that can crack a bottle now and then, Mr. Edgerton!—a man of your kidney—*(ſhaking me by the hand.)*

Have an eye to her here in London, or let me for you——I would not have her come

to harm before you get her back again——I have an abhorrence of this London.

E'faith you're right——This is a damn'd ſcheme to-morrow night——

Without ſome ſtaunch friend of your's with her.

I wiſh you'd dine with me to-morrow, and go to this Julip affair with her—I can truſt her to you——

Why; to oblige you—I hate them places, there's no having a bottle at 'em; but, however, I will—You'll do a turn for me another time?——

Thank ye—thank ye—that I will—will crack a bottle with ye at any time.—And Friday for the tavern port—What ſay ye?

By all means; I'll call on ye at three o'clock.

Woundly late that.

'Tis ſo—Two's a better hour—but this damn'd London.

Aye, two—two.

Horrible

Horrible ſtuff this to write you; but as I think you will like to know what ſort of a beaſt I have to deal with, I am ſure no deſcription of the animal can give you a ſtronger idea than the above ſketch of his converſation.

The next day I attended Miſs to the play —the youngeſt Duncombe was to have been of the party, but moſt dexterouſly I got Symons to call and offer her a ticket for the aſſembly, with himſelf to accompany: ſo I had the angelic creature to myſelf. She is no bad piece——tall and well made—not pretty, but has a good complexion. This is the firſt time of exhibiting herſelf at London. She is exceſſive pert, forward and vain—ſo a better dupe I cannot wiſh for.

I am amaz'd, Miſs Carter, that your uncle never brought you to London before; ſo perfectly qualified as you are to outſhine the faireſt here!——

It was very odd, Sir, indeed. I had always a great inclination for polite life.

Swallowed at once, by Heaven! One gulp, and down it went.

Your inclination, Madam, leads you where none can rival you—for greater beauty I never beheld.

You are pleas'd to compliment me, Sir.

Not a whit, indeed: Heaven preſerve my heart while in your company, is all I pray—But alas! my buſineſs was almoſt done at the firſt glance. You are indeed too fair.—*Kiſſing her hand with ſighs and languiſhing looks.*

Dear Sir!—Pray—your politeneſs, Sir—

Mere common civility, Madam, to ſuch beauty as your's.——There is a celebrated Opera next Thurſday—You doubtleſs love muſic?

Infinitely.

I concluded ſo—becauſe 'tis taſte—and people that have not taſte, you know, are beings of another world.

To be ſure——

Shall I be bleſſed with attending you?

Perhaps

Perhaps——Why, Sir——My uncle——dear Sir, you cannot think how ſtrange a a man he is——he——

Leave that to me, Madam: I will plead for you, and doubt not but I ſhall prevail.

I ſhall be vaſtly obliged to you.——

The play paſs'd off without one obſervation which ſhowed even common ſenſe—She's an errant fool in town. What ſhe may be among the Johns and Jackdaws of the country, I know not. On our return, I *crack'd a bottle* with the old fellow; who was full of thanks for my taking ſuch good care of his niece.——

Zounds, Mr. Carter! ſhe's a tight wench—and will make a good woman—and has good ſenſe too. I really don't think London will hurt *her*.

Don't ye? Mr. Edgerton, Don't ye?

Faith I don't.——Let her ſee a little of the town, it won't be amiſs—ſhe's prudent——a prudent girl.

Here's to ye.——Thank ye for adviſing me.—The girl ſhall ſee the town—I'll go with

with her to see the lions myself——and then there's——

I'll conduct her.——I don't admire women's company——but such a worthy country gentleman as you, Mr. Carter, can do any thing with me.

That's kind—that's kind, Mr. Edgerton.

There's an Opera next Thursday: I shall be unengaged——and will give her an hour or two.——

She shall go.—You're very kind, indeed.

We got half seas over, and parted quite loving friends.

* * * *

Thursday 16th. Nothing was ever half so a-propos: My plague is done with. Heaven rest her soul—Amen. So much for her. That hell-hound, Mother Gooch, is the most convenient devil one could ever meet with; but most damnably dear. Too much for the present ebb of my cash; but the worldly-minded jade has got me bound in parchment, hand and feet, witnesses in plenty,

plenty, money paid and received, and the devil to do. Such another victory, and I am undone! By Heavens! a wife had need bring money, when they coſt ſuch a plaguy deal to get rid of!——However, this is a wind which wafts a balmy gale of comfort to my ſoul. Nothing now in the way to ſtepping into the fifteen hundred per ann.—not one penny leſs would do.—I muſt go into deep mourning for the loſs of my deary; and as to other particulars, the management of the funeral, &c. is in Mother Gooch, with the neceſſary parade of all due circumſtances both of time and place.

* * * *

I have been to dine with old Carter.—After dinner,

Come, Mr. Edgerton, don't look ſo grave—Zounds, man! what, for a woman!—

Oh! Ridiculous, Mr. Carter: I was a little grieved at a letter I received this morning from my ſteward in the country.——A large barn blown down!——A large barn,

my

my friend!——A woman! quotha!—And this puppy of a fellow writes—Let me ſee—here——"And to be ſure, Sir, I could not help it——all the houſes on your Honour's eſtate are in ſpecial repair—but accidents will happen——however, one barn on ſo fine an eſtate of your Honour's of three thouſand a year, is but a trifle."——A dog!——A barn a trifle! This fellow don't know his maſter! A man that don't value a yard of old thatch upon an old barn, will never increaſe his fortune.—Small matters are of conſequence, Mr. Carter!——

In good troth, you're right——I like your notions well.——Zounds! Mr. Edgerton, you're a thriving man, as one may ſay.

Pretty warm in the world. Why you muſt know, Mr. Carter, I have paid off a mortgage my fool of a brother left on the eſtate, elſe I ſhould have been better off——but, however, pretty well off——A few India bonds and ſomething in the Bank. But a barn!——

A matter of conſequence.——Adzooks, if money muſt go—think of the turtles and turbots, and the bumpers of burgundy.

Oh! good Lord! a barn! a barn!

Oh! a ſad loſs! But drink——

Here's to your niece.—Egad, if ſhe had two thouſand a year contiguous eſtate, well wooded, in good repair, with a thouſand or two ready—Ha! ha! ha!—egad, Mr. Carter, I'd be your nephew! Ha! ha! ha!

By the Lord Harry, I wiſh you——

Ha! ha! ha! A random ſhot! a random ſhot! Ha! ha! ha!

In good troth, no bad match; for fifteen hundred a year, let me tell you, Mr. Edgerton——

Oh! a meer joke, Mr. Carter!—A mere flight!——The claret had got in my head a little——

The old Bruin ſnapp'd his eyes over his glaſs, as if much pleaſed with the hint. I really believe my plot will ſucceed.——I am interrupted from that damned bitch Mother Gooch;

Gooch; a *favour* to beg—confound her to the devil. Adieu, my friend, I deſigned to have kept this letter a little longer, but as the mail for North America goes out to-night, am willing to ſend it, though I queſtion whether it will not be there before you.

Your's,

R. EDGERTON.

LETTER XIV.

Sir Philip CHETWYN to Colonel FORRESTER.

MY dear Charles, you grow a moſt inſufferably negligent correſpondent, which I can ſcarce forgive, conſidering how ſeldom it is that I can poſſibly hear from you. I ſuppoſe you find me ſuch a retired piece, and ſo ſick of the world, that it is high time for the world to be ſick of me.—In good troth, I grow more and more in love with retirement—I have a kind of horror at the thoughts of returning into the ridiculous buſtle of the world, and verily believe that in this ſweet delicious ſpot, I ſhall quietly paſs the remainder of my unknown, unenvy'd days. Could I but make a deeper impreſſion on the heart of the heaven-born Emmera, and bring her to conſent to a journey to my father's for one day, juſt to have the happy knot tied, which would unite us for ever.

—Oh!

—Oh! Charles—'tis the only wiſh of my ſoul!—But ſo ſtrangely am I infatuated with my paſſion, that I dare not mention ſuch a ſcheme to her—and if I begin to point a converſation towards it, and but hint at the love I bear her, ſhe talks to me in ſuch a heavenly ſtrain of honour, virtue, purity of ſoul, and the like, as in a few minutes to ſhut up my mouth and make me ſwear to ſay no more. Were it not for this want—this cruel want, I ſhould be happier than your imagination can conceive. How amply are we repaid for the loſs of what the world can yield us! No tedious moments of impatient waiting on the numerous phantaſtic forms and folly of mankind. No hours of pining diſcontent at the cruel inequality of rank and fortune, which ſo often imbitters whole lives. No moroſeneſs—no ill humours—no caprice—no regret—no worldly diſtempers—and to ſum up all in one word—No Gold! but all one equal ſtream of health, chearfulneſs, ſerenity, and that true enjoyment of life, unknown

known in the world—but for which alone I wiſh to live.

Our happy little farm yields us a conſtant amuſement of a moſt rational and agreeable kind. I am quite in raptures when my Emmera and I walk arm in arm, and view the little labours of the day, gilt by the mild beams of a ſetting ſun. That ſweet ſtillneſs of nature, which uſhers in the dewy evening, throws a calm upon the attentive ſoul, and makes us forget the loſs of the departing day. 'Tis then we ramble through our pictur'd fields, and view the outward line of our *domain*, without one ſigh to add an acre from our neighbour's ſoil! 'Tis then we mark the progreſs of our crops, obſerve what's wanting in the culture—and ſee that the kindly influence of good huſbandry, does not become the prey of noxious weeds. I know not a more elegant and pleaſing ſight than rows of vigorous growing vegetables, ſhooting with blooming healthineſs from a ſoil kept fine and clean: My Emmera and I

can walk through all our farm, and ſcarcely ſee a weed—if we eſpy one ſingle intruder, we immediately root him out.——This attention, which habit and the agreeable conſequences of it, have rendered pleaſing, gives our fields the appearance of a fine and well kept garden: The rows of corn and culinary herbs all thrive in a manner far exceeding whatever I have noticed in common Engliſh huſbandry: I am unacquainted with all agriculture but what I have practiſed here, but ſhould imagine, if inſtruments were contrived to ſow the corn with expedition (which would be no difficult matter) this culture muſt anſwer on a larger ſcale: but for our uſe a ſmall ſpot yields ſufficient, and the labour we beſtow on it is infinitely agreeable. —Have you not ſome idea, my friend, of a hale, cloſe-fiſted, country milk-maid in England, when I talk of my Emmera's weeding and hoeing and other laborious employments? Certainly you have—but much are you miſtaken—Never was woman of greater delicacy of perſon than this elegant girl—

Not

Not a *faſhionable* delicacy, an affectation of brittleneſs and nicety—but a clear, glowing and animated complexion, fine as painting can expreſs, and her hands and arms of the moſt lovely form and hue I ever beheld——Indeed ſhe has ſomething of the woman in her——and being exceſſive cleanly, extends it to an attentive care of her hands—which ſhow not one tinge of labour. Her perſon is all native grace and elegance! She moves through her own little creation like the queen of grace and beauty, diffuſing a freſh vegetation on all the beauties of Nature—What rays of grace ſhoot from each moving limb!—

* * * *

My dear Emmera the other day opened a ſmall and highly valued caſket of her late father's, to look for a volume of Plutarch, which ſhe thought might be in it. She found what ſhe ſought for, and among other papers a ſmall table-book, written nearly full, in her father's hand. It was entitled, *The Narrative.* She brought it to me directly—— "Dear," ſaid ſhe, "I can't think what this

is!——I found it among my father's papers ——let us read a little of it."——I took the book, and turning over a leaf or two—— "My dear Emmera, this is certainly a narrative of your father's life, which he has penned himſelf ſince his retirement; let us ſit down under yon tulip-tree, and I will read it to you."

"So we will," replied ſhe:——But conſidering a minute——and taking it out of my hand——"This will be a great entertainment to us, and we will reſerve it for the next *Hermitage Day*."

Dear Emmera, let us read it now; I am very impatient to know——

So am I; but, with your leave, I will lay it by for the preſent, and inſtead of it we will have Plutarch, which we were ſearching for.

Why ſhould we keep the manuſcript till we go again to the Hermitage? I had rather have it now.

Indeed, Mr. Chetwyn, you muſt learn to make the moſt of pleaſure——my dear father never

never went to that ſweet retirement without enlivening it with ſomething or other which we did not meet with at home: Let us imitate him, and endeavour to render the few days we ſpend there as pleaſing as poſſible.

But it will be ſome time before we ſhall go there.

No it won't.——Your birth-day, you know, is within a month. This Narrative ſhall be the entertainment of that day.

I acquieſced in her management, though a little unwillingly; but there was ſomething ſo pleaſing in her manner of urging it, as was to me irreſiſtible. I wait, therefore, with impatience for my birth-day, that I may again behold that ſweet ſpot, and have my curioſity gratified in reading her father's Narrative: Beſides which, I ſomehow take a little more courage at the hermitage, and conſider it, as it really is, the ſweeteſt ſcene for love the world ever ſaw; and I think there is an agreeable tenderneſs in my Emmera when ſhe is there, rather more conſpicuous than at other

times.——A little of that ſoft melancholy of ſoul, which to me, as it appears in her, is Heaven itſelf.

* * * *

The above was wrote ſome time ago; but I laid aſide the paper till I could finiſh it with ſomething worth the writing. At laſt the wiſh'd-for day arrived; we once more dared to tempt the woody ſtream which leads unto the Hermitage—that charming reſervoir of all that nature in a penſive hour could form moſt elegant.——Oh! how I hail'd the ſweet ſpot with a ſtrong emotion of heart-felt pleaſure! We both of us conſider a viſit to this enchanting ſcene as the greateſt treat imaginable.——I read her father's Narrative to my Emmera, which, and converſing on it, was the chief buſineſs of the day. I have copied it for you, and ſend it in this packet.

THE NARRATIVE.

IF ſeveral years ſpent in the moſt ſolitary retirement, with ſcarce any intellectual employment, but that of meditating on a variety of changes of fortune and happineſs which chequer'd the firſt part of a life ſpent in the buſy world—if years of thoughtfulneſs have calmed a ruffled ſoul, ſurely I may pretend at laſt *To know myſelf*. Had Heaven bleſs'd me ſooner with this knowledge, the laſt part of my life would not have been ſhaded with regretting the follies of the firſt!

I was the younger ſon of a gentleman of large eſtate in Berkſhire, and having the misfortune to be beloved by neither my father nor my mother, my education was miſerably neglected: I was kept at home for cheapneſs, and all the inſtruction I gained from others, was at London of a French dancing-maſter and a fencing-maſter. My mother was

aſhamed I ſhould be ſeen ſo much in town with her while I wanted *carriage*, and therefore theſe honeſt gentry were ſent for to make me fit for company. No cheaper riddance of me offering, my father accepted a cornetcy in a regiment of dragoons for me, and I with great pleaſure prepared for a life, which would at leaſt take me from the ſhade of unkind parental brows.

I was eighteen when I became a ſoldier, and at this diſtance of time I think I may without vanity aſſert, that however deficient I was in literature and knowledge, ſcarce a man in the army had a better figure—a more graceful carriage—or was in a higher degree, what the women of thoſe days called *a fine fellow*. I heſitate not at theſe expreſſions, ſince great reaſon have I to wiſh, that inſtead of beauty, uglineſs had been my portion—a humped back and a hobling gait would have ſecured me from very poignant miſeries!

My regiment was quartered at a city in the weſt of England, remarkable for very brilliant

liant diverſions, when I was ordered to repair to it. I took leave of my father, mother, and brothers, without feeling any other emotions than thoſe of pleaſure; I had a ſiſter whom I tenderly loved: Parting from her gave me as much pain as a youth of my age juſt entering the world is ſuſceptible of. Full of life and vivacity, I haſtened to my quarters; thinking of little elſe than the agreeable life I ſhould lead in the ſociety of the officers; men in general who underſtood what I thought pleaſure, and practiſed it. Let me obſerve, however, that by the word *pleaſure*, I meant not then, what I did too ſoon afterwards. I had an idea of nothing more agreeable than a life of idle but innocent diſſipation, dangling after the women, dreſſing fine, and making a genteel figure at a ball.

I preſently became acquainted with ſeveral of my brethren, but none among them ſtruck me ſo much as a young nobleman I ſhall call Lord L. who had a company in the regiment. He had a fine perſon, an agreeable countenance,

nance, and a moſt lively and entertaining wit. We ſoon became acquainted—and by degrees intimately. He introduced me to the Colonel, who then happened to be preſent, not as a new officer, but in a friendly ſtile as an acquaintance. He was between thirty and forty, had a gallant appearance, great politeneſs, and an immenſe fortune. My two new friends I found were greatly addicted to women, and carried this paſſion to a length, little conſiſtent with that delicacy of manners of which I had an high idea, and which in other points they perfectly well underſtood. Young, and fond of *pleaſure*, as I was, I never thought of ſeeking it among women, whoſe rank, manners and carriage ſeemed to me ſo utterly to exclude it. Among the ladies I was ſtudious to pleaſe, and the idea of an intrigue *there*, with the heart participating, never offended me.—My friends laughed at my nicety—ridiculed my notions, but ſtill were pleaſed with my company. They liked my converſation, and thought they ſaw ſomething in me,

me, which, however diſguiſed at preſent, would one day or other make me an admirable fellow.

With different amuſements and their company my time paſſed very agreeably: I took the hint from their converſation (which really was very enlarged, and fraught with excellent knowledge) to improve the fountain of my own, by reading a variety of excellent authors with great attention. Lord L. frequently read with me, and on theſe occaſions I had much reaſon to admire the man. His learning was extenſive—his taſte excellent, and his capacity ſo great, that every thing he read he made more his own than even the authors themſelves could boaſt. I cannot help recollecting a thouſand agreeable converſations I had with him of this kind, which threw a luſtre on his character that ought to have preſerved it from the ſhade of too free a life.

The Colonel and my Lord grew more and more pleaſed with my company, and a million of

of times ridiculed to me the poverty of ideas, which rendered moſt of the other officers companions for no man of ſenſe:—and indeed there was ſome truth in the ſatire: but they ſtill attacked me on the old point with all the ſtrength of their raillery; threw allurements in my way, and would have thought me an angel of light, had I been as debauched as themſelves. However, I anſwered their arguments—laugh'd in my turn—and was proof againſt the artificial ſmiles of deſpicable women. This general turn of life laſted above two years, without their ever having caught me tripping, ſave once, which was matter of no ſmall exultation; in defence of myſelf I muſt relate the adventure.

The Colonel having requeſted my company, with Lord L.'s, for a month at his ſeat in Shropſhire, I accordingly attended him: and in a more brilliant taſte no man could live. His houſe, or rather palace, was magnificent and moſt ſumptuouſly furniſhed; his attendants numerous and admirably

rably appointed: his park, plantations, woods, groves, gardens, temples, &c. &c. all in a noble taſte, holding forth to the admiring eye every thing that elegance could render pleaſing. The Colonel was the moſt luxurious man, I believe, of the age he lived in—this magnificence, therefore, was not vanity in him, but his real taſte.

One evening, after ſome company had left him, he told my Lord and I, that he intended ſupping at the Hermitage, having an inclination to ſpend the evening quite in retirement—to which we aſſenting, he gave orders for ſupper being ſerved there. It was a walk of ſome diſtance through his plantations, and winding in ſeveral thick groves, which at laſt brought us to a little building like a gardener's tool-houſe; we entered a diſmal hole, and going through a ſmall dark paſſage, the Colonel unlock'd the door which opened into a ſmall, neat room; out of which we entered his hermitage—one of the moſt elegant ſaloons I ever beheld, lighted up by a moſt

moſt brilliant chandelier. The room was very large, of the juſteſt proportions, with ſuch voluptuous, princely furniture, that imagination cannot conceive a more charming ſight, than the firſt entrance from a diſmal, dark hole, into a room ſo wonderfully elegant. The hangings were of the fineſt Indian ſilk, the ſophas the ſame; the carpet the moſt beautiful figured velvet I ever beheld: the paintings exquiſite beyond all idea, originals of Titian and Coreggio, moſtly Venus's. The chimney-piece in the lighteſt and moſt airy taſte that fancy can imagine. In ſhort, every thing which the moſt luxurious imagination could think of employing to adorn a room, and render it beyond all compariſon delightful, was here laviſhed with an unſparing but judicious hand.

Is this your *hermitage*, Colonel?

Why, Sir, we give it different names—The Hermitage—The Temple of Venus—The Saloon of Apollo—or what you will.

A moſt angelic temple!

I mean it as a room ſacred to friendſhip—No common viſitant ever comes near it—and I never yet had a larger party in it than three. If elegant proportions, gay and chearful furniture, and a brilliancy of the toût enſemble around one, can have a pleaſing effect on the mind, I think in this room we ſhould be chearful and lively. The deſign of it is fully anſwered I aſſure you, Sir, if you find yourſelf *pleaſed* in it.

After converſing ſome time on the paintings and the art in general, the Colonel aſked if ſupper would be agreeable? Lord L. replied, "Very much ſo, but ſuch a room was too delicate for meals, and he did not think it good management to have them in it."—There is no objection in that, my Lord, replied the Colonel, as you ſhall ſee—

He ſhoved two ſopha's into the middle of the room, "Come, gentlemen, pleaſe to be ſeated"——and preſſing with his foot on the floor—the carpet divided; the floor opened; and up ſprung a table in an inſtant before us

—covered

—covered with a cold collation, the moſt elegantly ſet out that can be conceived, with every thing we could want (inſtead of waiters) diſpoſed in little pyramids, arches, temples, &c.—the whole in a pictureſque and moſt pleaſing taſte. When our repaſt was finiſhed—the Colonel with a touch of his foot ſunk the table, and immediately a ſecond aroſe covered with a deſſert, and wines of the moſt exquiſite ſort. Our converſation received a poignancy from the enchantment of our ſituation, and the ſparkling glaſſes juſt contributed in an agreeable manner to enliven our ideas. All was feſtive gaiety of ſoul, and every thought breathed nothing but eaſe and good humour. In the midſt of our converſe of life and vivacity, a few melting ſtrains of ſoft muſick came quivering upon our liſtening ears. The ſound by ſlow degrees grew louder, till a whole band of inſtruments, unſeen, lull'd our very ſouls to Heaven with the divine enchanting breath of more than mortal harmony. The dying, trembling ſounds came floating on melodious

wings,

wings, and in ſoft raviſhment enchain'd our waken'd ſenſes. Good Heaven! what notes! Methinks they vibrate yet upon my ear, and ſink into the ſoul! While all our ſenſes were near loſt in hearing, one ſide of the room, without the leaſt appearance of any change, began to riſe from the ground like the curtain of a theatre; the muſic continuing with the moſt voluptuous, melting ſtrains: It was ſome minutes before what I thought the wall, entirely diſappeared—and the ſight which then ſtruck my aſtoniſhed eyes, is what fancy can ſcarcely conceive, much leſs can words deſcribe.——The room became of double its former ſize, and the whole ſide againſt us, which now appeared, preſented one prodigious view of gorgeous radiance, the whole ſparkling with an amazing profuſion of precious ſtones. Full in the middle was raiſed a ſofa of ſhining ſilk, beſet with jewels——the back a peacock's tail dazzling with the ſame—and over the whole, a canopy of brilliant tiſſue all moſaic'd

with diamonds; the throne whereon the ſofa reſted, and ſteps which led unto it, appeared of burniſh'd gold. Upon the ſofa lay, at her full length in a reclining poſture, her head reſting upon her hand, a bewitching girl, with no cloathing to conceal her naked beauties, ſave a black velvet collar on her neck ſtudded with diamonds. Jove! what a ſight was this! more dazzling than all the radiant brightneſs that ſhone around her! This part of the ſcene which ſtruck my raviſh'd ſoul, and quite overpower'd the heavenly muſic yet playing to our now inattentive ears, was half incloſed in a circular range of moſt ſplendid Corinthian pillars of ſhining gold, all entwin'd with wreaths of diamonds. On each ſide the ſemicircular range two projecting columns appeared in front, and then two ſofa's, one on either ſide, the backs and canopies ſhining with jewels—ſplendid and elegant beyond imagination—inferior only to the middle——On each a goddeſs lay, diſplaying to the gazing eye the ſnowy tints

tints of Nature's happieſt painting. The light which glitter'd in all this blaze of glorious brightneſs, came darting with enlivening rays from the night's ſtarry pavement—for ſo appeared the cieling; all bright ſuns beſprinkled o'er a duſky mantle, ſhining with luſtre on a world of glory.

So noble and brilliant a ſight had never enter'd my fancy in its warmeſt hour, much leſs had I ever beheld any thing equal to it. The immenſe profuſion of jewels ſtruck me with aſtoniſhment. The whole was one continued blaze of all that the moſt glowing imagination can conceive moſt magnificently elegant. The muſic dying away to a pauſe, the Venus of the middle ſofa—raiſing herſelf a little, and looking with a ſmile towards us—began a ſong with a moſt ſyren-like melodious pipe, accompanied by the unſeen inſtruments in the happieſt manner: The other two joined in chorus with her to the words of *Come, and partake the joys of love*, warbling together in ſuch exquiſitely touch-

ing ſtrains of melting harmony, that no ſoul but one of adamant could have been proof againſt ſuch an aſſemblage of the beautiful, acting in one moment with more than human force upon his attentive ſenſes.

The Colonel making me a ſignificant bow, and pointing to the middle ſofa, filed off to that on the left ſide—my Lord did the ſame to the right, and I with the ſteps of ſpeed took the hint in an inſtant. I was no ſooner on the ſteps which led to the ſofa, but a new enchantment took place—The whole canopy, ſofa, ſteps, &c. were in the twinkling of an eye encloſed with a new wall of burniſh'd pillars, glittering with jewels—and formed a moſt elegant and complete room lighted up by a chandelier, one blaze of diamonds. This was my bed-chamber—and here——But let me drop the curtain of oblivion; nor ever more retain one trace in my remembrance that this was once reality.—

In the morning, when I opened the door to leave the ſcene of my deluſion, I took one

ſtep,

ſtep, and found myſelf between two clipt hedges in a garden——"Heavens! thought I; magic again!——but I will mark this door."——I turned myſelf around, and found the hedge behind me, nor the leaſt ſign of any door.——I followed the path, which through winding mazes brought me at laſt to a part of the garden I remembered.——Lord L. afterwards informed me, that he had twice before ſacrificed to Venus in this bewitching temple, and contrary to his utmoſt endeavour, both the laſt times deceived in his attempts to diſcover where it was—So well as he knew the gardens and buildings in them, he never could fix on one with any certainty for the Temple of Venus.

Thus have I drawn myſelf in to make a recital of an adventure ſo little to my honour——but the excuſe of the greatneſs of the temptation to a young man in the fire of youth, will, I doubt not, plead ſufficiently in my behalf; eſpecially as neither the luxurious Colonel, nor his Lordſhip, with all

their raillery, could ever change my taſte ſo greatly, as to make me reliſh or perſue a life in that reſpect like theirs.

Our friendſhip, however, continued to unite us cloſely. It is too often the caſe, that agreeable qualities of the heart make amends for that ſteady virtue of the ſoul which ought ever to form the ſtrongeſt links of friendſhip; the eaſy, chearful and entertaining companion pleaſes more than the determined adherent to reaſon, virtue and religion. I always admired theſe men, becauſe they were conſtantly agreeable, and perhaps above all, becauſe they ever were pleaſed with me. This is the nature of the human mind, but it is the ſource of fatal errors.

Among the parties of pleaſure in which Lord L. the Colonel, and myſelf were frequently engaged, and which many of the chief inhabitants of the city and neighbouring gentry often formed for our amuſement ——or rather for the amuſement of themſelves,

ſelves, in the gratification of their *taſte* for lively and polite company—In one of theſe parties, I accidentally became ſlightly acquainted with a young lady, the daughter of a gentleman of ſmall eſtate in the neighbourhood. I ſhall here diſtinguiſh her by her own name of Charlotte. The firſt or ſecond time I met her ſhe ſcarcely attracted my notice—afterwards I had ſome trifling converſation with her—I thought her lively and agreeable, and frequently addreſs'd myſelf to her—Her agreeableneſs encreaſed upon me—I thought her wit was delicate and refined—and her converſation, when of the graver kind, abounded in remarks worthy of more than common notice; I had ſcarce examined her perſon, fully perſuaded that nothing leſs than uncommon beauty would make a conqueſt of my heart—this piece of vanity aroſe from the attention I met with among the ſex in general——I was then in the vigour of youth—and having a perſon which was a recommendation to women's

company, I met with a degree of eaſy yielding politeneſs which gave me an idea of having no great difficulty in taking a large range, and chuſing at pleaſure.

I thought this lady's converſation ſo agreeable, that I took a careleſs examination of her face and perſon—her countenance was animated and pleaſing; her features regular and agreeable; her perſon eaſy and elegant—— Zounds, thought I, I have attended to this girl's mind—and her body's worth attention. I preſs'd her on the ſide of gallantry; and her replies were witty—and ſometimes ſarcaſtical; but mixed with an agreeable tenderneſs of manner which gave me hope. I attacked her vigorouſly, but the company was too large for me to judge of future ſucceſs. I engaged her for a ball appointed the week following, and was pleaſed to find her dancing remarkably graceful. I took this opportunity of private converſation in the midſt of muſic, dancing and dreſs, vivacity and livelineſs, to beſiege her heart with all the addreſs and ſkill my inclination could afford

afford me. I ſpoke to her in the warmeſt terms of tenderneſs and love; proteſted the ſtrength of my paſſion—and ply'd her with all that can move a female mind to love. Her wit parry'd my attacks, but ſhowed me by a thouſand little touches *of the woman*, that my importunity was not diſagreeable to her. We parted highly ſatisfied with each other, and were mutually well aſſured, that another ſpeedy meeting would be very agreeable.

My friends Lord L. and the Colonel rallied me on my new amour; complimented me on my taſte—but pour'd forth millions of ſatirical warnings againſt my being *trammel'd*, as they term'd it: ſwore I ſhould deſerve every horror that could attend *a catch*, if I was chous'd by a girl not worth a thouſand pounds. I was too ſtrongly confirmed in my idea of the ruin attending a marriage without a vaſt increaſe of fortune, to fear in the leaſt being ſo taken in; but I began to like the girl, and I had a great notion of her liking me.

Suc-

Succeſſive meetings forwarded the matter, and I found myſelf by degrees deeply in love with her—Her affection for me alſo was no longer doubtful; and we enjoyed in our mutual paſſion infinite happineſs--Her father, with ridiculous inattention, omitted ever taking notice of my connection with his daughter, but complimented me with invitations to his houſe—he either did not ſee it, being no bright man, or if he did, had no objections to his daughter's making a catch of me. This fatal imprudence gave me all the opportunities of ſeeing my Charlotte I could wiſh; —and as a lively, witty freedom began our intercourſe, and continued briſkly during the firſt part of it—ſo the latter ſentimental part of our paſſion was not ſo free from it, as if no ſuch foundation had been laid.—This introduced a familiarity of behaviour which occaſioned my taking ſome liberties, the tendency of which might eaſily be gueſſed: and ended in our indulging our paſſion to exceſs.

Enjoyment did not in the leaſt abate the violent paſſion I entertained for this agreeable

young

young creature; but it was the ſource of a thouſand pangs, till then unfelt in my breaſt: The alarm, fear and horror which filled her mind, communicated their influence to mine, and made me wretched at the thought of the evils which awaited the idol of my ſoul. She grew extremely miſerable, but never once mentioned marriage, a delicacy I could not but admire. It is impoſſible to expreſs the racking perplexity that prey'd upon my ſoul on the unhappy ſituation of my Charlotte, and the former firm reſolution I had taken never to *incumber* myſelf with a wife: all the motives that could inſpire that reſolution were freſh in my memory, but the wretchedneſs of my Charlotte pleaded powerfully againſt them, and raiſed a miſerable conflict within me. But the lovely maid, ſo amiable in her diſtreſs, ſo delicate, ſo uncomplaining in her behaviour; moved all that was tender in me, and I began to waver in my reſolutions, and thought of the infamy of abandoning her.

I fancy my two friends ſuſpected the ſtate of the caſe, and ſeemed to doubt of my reſolu-

ſolution. Lord L. took more than common pains to perſuade me not to think of a marriage which muſt inevitably be my ruin; hinted even——"that while Charlotte was a mere miſtreſs, he ſhould be entirely ſilent, but could not be ſo when I thought of undoing myſelf; and with a woman too, that ——" and heſitating—"She will do for an intrigue—but——for Heaven's ſake—never think of a marriage ſo highly——I cannot ſpeak—but ſurely you may underſtand me." ——My Lord's myſterious manner amaz'd me for ſome minutes; but my love moving within my ſoul with tenderneſs at the very idea of her I lov'd, almoſt burſt into rage at the moſt diſtant hint againſt the woman ſo deeply rooted in my heart. There was ſomething in his manner, which inſinuated infinitely more than he ſpoke; which alarmed me for a moment, but afterwards vaniſhed, in my opinion, into mere malevolence, or what I thought, a ridiculous ſolicitude in his Lordſhip to have me of the ſame libertine prin-

principles as himſelf. I treated his inſinuation with contempt, and was on the verge of a quarrel; but he left me, ſaying—"the day would come when I ſhould repent my damn'd infatuation."——

The Colonel's ridicule ſoon followed, and theſe obſtacles to my faint deſigns, became incentives to quicken the intention: I almoſt determined to marry a woman who became every day dearer to me—and whoſe conſtant conduct in ſo delicate a ſituation—ſo open to every breath of indiſcretion, gave me a great opinion of her temper and underſtanding. So much mildneſs in her manner—ſuch a total reliance on my generoſity—ſuch miſery of ſoul, yet ſo ſilent in her reproaches!—I could not but love a woman in every reſpect ſo worthy of my admiration.

By degrees I forgot the reaſons once ſo urgent, which made me reſolve againſt marrying: I reconciled the contrary conduct to my mind, through the deceitful influence of my heart, and the concluſion of all was

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an open aſſurance to my Charlotte, that on the firſt day ſhe named I would publickly make her mine; deſiring her to break the matter to her father in the manner ſhe thought moſt proper. I abhor'd the idea of a private marriage, or it would have been the moſt prudent ſtep by far, as I might be certain, without the ſhadow of a doubt, that when it came to the ears of my haughty father, his anger would be extreme. But love at that time poſſeſſed my whole ſoul, and in ſuch a ſituation, it would have been exceeding wonderful had I liſtened to any dictates but thoſe of paſſion alone.

My Charlotte was not backward in expreſſions of the warmeſt gratitude to me on my mentioning the deſign—turning it on the unuſual generoſity of acting ſo to a woman that had yielded up herſelf without ſuſpicions, to love alone. We were ſoon joined for ever, and the calm enjoyment of our now regular paſſion was not inferior to the firſt warmth of novelty.——This happineſs was not much alloyed by a moſt enraged

raged letter I received from my father, with an immediate ſtoppage of a quarterly allowance I received from him—nor by the coldneſs of my two friends, the Colonel and Lord L. ſince theſe conſequences were ſuch, as I well knew would infallibly happen.

But it was with no ſmall degree of ſurprize, that in a few weeks I perceived ſomething in my wife which looked a little like a change in that aſſiduous affection with which ſhe always treated me—Beyond all doubt a change happened before I ſaw it; for ſo intoxicated was I with the full draught I drank of love, that I was blind to what muſt have been viſible enough. I ſaw a coldneſs in her which aſtoniſh'd me, and ſtruck daggers to my ſoul. Heavens! thought I; this is the treacherous deluſion of my jealous fancy; it cannot be: I muſt be miſtaken——I will not think it thus:——Still my ſuſpicions remained—I even thought it ſo ſtriking, that I one day mentioned it to her; with all the tenderneſs, however, imaginable. She received

ceived it with great agitation; ſeemed ſhocked at my ſuſpicions; and appeared really miſerable that I ſhould for one moment entertain an idea ſo injurious to her. I could not diſbelieve her—ſhe ſpoke with an air of genuine truth, and with all the endearing tokens of that love I thought fled for ever—I put moſt religious confidence in every ſyllable, and condemned the imprudent, unjuſt ſuſpicions I had harboured againſt the idol of my ſoul.—All my fears were effaced, and once more I taſted conjugal felicity.

There is no ſtate in life, in which, ſooner or later, the damnable affairs of money will not interfere, and throw its horrid ſpokes in every wheel of life. I had nothing to ſubſiſt on but my pay——no allowance from my father——no fortune with my wife, and what was worſe than all, not a few creditors at the time of my marriage, who were not leſſened on that account. I never gave any attention to money matters——was a man of but very little expence myſelf; but negligence is as ruinous as extravagance——I was perplexed

plexed with theſe crabbed affairs, ſo contrary to every thing I could endure——I gave every one good words, promiſes and perſuaſions; but they dunned me for ſecurities, a confounded commodity I could not deal in, for I had ever a mortal averſion to parchment. —This was the life I led with theſe muſhrooms of my own imprudence; until an accident ſtopped their voracious mouths for a time. My elder brother died, and left me the heir of a conſiderable eſtate; and what was as good as the rent-roll itſelf, conſidering the terms I was on with my father, was its being ſettled.—My creditors were ſilent the moment they knew me to be the undoubted heir.

Once more, being eaſed from the load of perpetual uneaſineſs, I enjoyed myſelf in the poſſeſſion of all earthly happineſs—for ſo I found my wife grew more and more to me.—My paſſion for her increaſed with the numerous traits of an elegant mind, which unfolded themſelves by degrees to my

enraptured view; and rendered me a truly happy man. Above a twelvemonth paſſed without my ſcarcely knowing what a wretched reflection was. My Charlotte eaſed all my little griefs, by dividing them with me; and by the infinite agreeableneſs of her temper, turned them into tranquillity itſelf. She reconciled me to the Colonel and Lord L. and ſeemed to know no joy but what aroſe from my happineſs.

Our regiment received orders to march from the city where it then was quartered, to a ſea-port town at ſome diſtance: This was an unlucky ſtroke to me, as it removed me from the company of a great number of acquaintance, and from the neighbourhood of my wife's father. The old man deſired I would leave his daughter with him till I was a little ſettled at my new quarters; and my Charlotte appearing not to diſlike the ſcheme, I agreed to it at once. The evening before the regiment left the city, an elegant ball was given by the officers as a trifling acknow-

knowledgment for the civilities received in the place. After ſome dances with a lady of the city, the Colonel ſtood up too with my wife; and myſelf not being engaged with any partner, could not help obſerving a little freedom in the Colonel's carriage towards her, which, trifling as it was, aſtoniſhed me. ——Without appearing to take the leaſt notice, I watched them with the moſt jealous attention——What poiſon dropt to my very ſoul!——I thought I ſaw a familiarity that ſtruck me dumb—I doubted—I ſhould have ventured to diſbelieve the evidence of my ſenſes, but I clearly perceived a caution leſt I ſhould ſee them. We were to march the next morning: the night was a night of horror to me—I roſe early, and taking leave of my wife and her father, ſet off with the corps.—The Colonel did not lead us—he ſtaid behind.—This awakened my jealouſy—I was ſtung to the heart at the very idea of what *might* be contriving againſt me.—My mind was all horror at the faineſt trace of ſuch a notion. I ſuddenly determined to return to my wife without hardly

knowing why or wherefore—I made an excuſe to the officers for ſo immediate a return, and poſted back again from the ſecond ſtage. I rode directly to her father's houſe—hung my horſe at the gate—and walked in—I met my wife's maid in the hall—I aſked her where her miſtreſs was—ſhe coloured and heſitated for an anſwer.—The old man came in ——ſtarted infinitely at ſeeing me. "Where is my wife?" ſaid I—but without waiting for an anſwer, walked to the ſtair-caſe, and was going up; but he fixed himſelf in my way, and would have prevented me. My heart and ſoul boiled within me; I puſh'd him aſide, and running ſoftly up, went directly to her bed-chamber door. I opened it with trembling hands; and, good Heaven! what was the ſight which then flew, wing'd with horror, to my inmoſt ſoul! The Colonel almoſt in the act of my diſhonour.—I could not ſpeak—I could ſcarce breathe for terror. I whipt out my ſword——"Draw, villain!"—He ran to his, and putting himſelf in a fighting poſture, I attacked him with

with fury: after ſome irregular lunges, which he parry'd with the ſame confuſion they were directed, I made a paſs at his heart, and ran him through the ſide. He fell at the feet of my devil, who brazened it out with a degree of impudence, to me incredible.—I laid my hand on a piſtol which I ſaw on the table, and was within an ace of ſending her to her kindred hell—but a ſecond thought prevented my being guilty of ſo cowardly an action: I therefore left the room, and running wildly down ſtairs, flew to my horſe, and rode off to the regiment immediately—I ſtaid ſcarce a quarter of an hour at the inn, took from my baggage my papers, and what little caſh I had by me, and mounting again, rode directly to the ſea-ſide. The moſt violent whirlwinds on that boiſterous element were calmneſs itſelf to the ſtorms of paſſion that agitated my ſoul.——I went on board a ſhip juſt ſetting ſail for Dublin, where I no ſooner arrived, than I again ſet ſail in another for France, and after a quick voyage, entered the port of Nantes.

It would be in vain to attempt to expreſs the horrid ſtate of my mind, from the moment of being convinced that my jealouſy was ſo well grounded—it was a ſtrange mixture of hatred, love, revenge, tenderneſs, and all the moſt oppoſite paſſions the human ſoul can become a prey to. To be *ſo* awakened from the delicious dream of love, in which I long had been ſo happy—to be plung'd at once into the very abyſs of miſery and deſpair. To be deceived—ſo miſerably deceived, in a woman that poſſeſſed my whole ſoul——Oh! God! with what burning anguiſh did I call on Heaven to end my days and ſorrow at once: and had not a ſtrong idea of the cowardly wickedneſs of the action withheld me, I ſhould have put an end to a life ſo peculiarly wretched. I wrote immediately to Lord L. to beg of him ſome information, expreſſing great concern that a man, who pretended to be my friend, ſhould behave ſo exceeding infamouſly as to draw on ſuch a fatal accident. His anſwer to my letter was not

not delayed——He opened a ſcene of horror, of which I had no conception. He told me, that it was only my own infinite hot-headed imprudence that plung'd me into a marriage ſo injurious to my honour: That my wife was known by ſome few in private to be of a very free turn of behaviour; that ſhe had had ſeveral amours with the men he knew—and among others, the Colonel. That I might remember the advice he gave me, and how warm I was on the leaſt hint being dropped againſt her—That he ſhould have proceeded in laying open her character to me, but was too well aſſured my heat was ſuch, that I ſhould challenge the neareſt friend before he got half through the recital. That the Colonel urged him ſtrongly to it, and ſwore that he would continue to treat her as his miſtreſs, that an abſurd fellow ſhould not ſpoil ſport by ſo damnable a marriage.—All this paſſed, but I was ſo ſtrangely hot and infatuated, that no ſoul would venture their lives to undeceive ſo raſh a man; eſpecially as they did not believe it could poſſibly

end ſo ridiculouſly as in marriage. He concluded with telling me, the Colonel was not dead, but dangerouſly wounded; that my wife poured forth perpetual execrations at my very name, and deteſted me for a fool, and the murderer of a man ſhe loved.—

Every line ſpoke daggers to my ſoul——Vile and contemptible as this worthleſs woman now appeared——I could not ceaſe loving her——In the midſt of all the deteſtation in which I held her, my infatuation was ſo great, that I regretted the moments of ſoft deluſion I had paſſed with her, and curſed my hard fate to think that ſo foul a mind ſhould lodge within a form ſo fair to my deſtruction.

So deſperate was the ſituation of my ſoul, that I ſcarce thought of maintaining my body; I ſoon fell into poverty almoſt extreme; and had it not been for a ſmall remittance or two from England, ſhould, literally ſpeaking, have been ſtarved. I laboured ſome time for my bread, and could ſcarce earn it.

I made

I made my way to Paris—diſcovered myſelf to the ſecretary of the embaſſy, who was diſtantly known to my father; he was kind enough to lend me a ſum of money, with which I ſubſiſted ſome time.—I received another aſſiſtance from Lord L. he managed for me ſo well as to ſell my commiſſion, and remitted me the money, but ſaid nothing of the Colonel or my wife.

This ſum, conſiderable in my preſent ſituation, placed me above actual want, but was no balm to the torturing poiſon that preyed upon my very vitals; it allowed me more time for thought than my ſtate of poverty; and of all the miſerable moments I paſſed, thoſe in which I thought the leaſt were by much the beſt. I felt ſtrongly the neceſſity of ſome employment or ſcenes of variety to catch my attention, and break the wretchedneſs of my reflections—Nothing offered to me equal to the idea of a ſea-voyage: I went into Holland, and agreed with an Eaſt India Captain for being carried to St. Helena, where I purpoſed waiting till an Engliſh ſhip

ſhould

ſhould paſs that way, when I deſigned proceeding to the Eaſt Indies. I accordingly executed my plan; and found the buſtle of a large ſhip ſome relief to the perpetual ſtretch of reflection in which my mind was ſo often rack'd.—I learnt of the Captain to play at cheſs, and never found any thing caught my attention more, or contributed in a greater degree to baniſh reflection from my mind.

I took a ſmall houſe on the iſland, and attempted all I could to become gay and diſſipated: I reaſoned with myſelf on the abſurdity of loving ſo violently a woman ſo palpably unworthy of all attention. Time and habit, by degrees, wore off the edge of my ſorrow, and I began to forget grief which reaſon would not ſanctify: I lived in a lively, agreeable manner on the iſland, till an Engliſh Indiaman arrived, and then going on board began my voyage for Bengal. The ſcheme did not anſwer my expectations, the climate and inhabitants equally diſagreeable; without meeting with many of thoſe natural curioſi-

ties

ties which anſwer ſo greatly to a man of true taſte and reflection. I was ſoon ſick of the country, and having reſided in it a twelve-month, was very glad of an opportunity to reimbark for my native country, tolerably cured of my unhappy infatuation, and relying pretty ſteadily on my reſolution never more to have any other ſentiments of my wife than thoſe of the moſt mortal contempt. I arrived in England, and there found freſh ſcenes to exerciſe a wounded mind, ſcarce cured of former ſorrows.

I made immediate enquiries after the Colonel, remaining myſelf in diſguiſe—I was informed he was alive and well.—I aſked concerning my wife, and heard ſhe was dead;—horribly dead—by the hands of the publick executioner!——Reſt her ſoul in peace, and be her crimes forgot!——

I preſently underſtood that my father was lately dead. Notwithſtanding his ill treatment of me, the unexpected ſtroke affected me greatly; his faults were buried with him, his good qualities remained freſh in my memory.

mory. By his death I became entitled to the family eſtate, no inconſiderable one—But how great was my aſtoniſhment, when I underſtood that it was divided among my three ſiſters, by a will of my father's, which took no notice of me or my rights; and that their huſbands had accordingly taken poſſeſſion of their reſpective ſhares——I was preſently beſet with creditors, open mouthed, and breathing nothing but arreſts, gaols and dungeons. I demonſtrated to them, that I was kept out of a noble fortune, either by mere villainy or ignorance; but that I ſhould preſently ſhew them how inſignificant ſuch wills would prove in contradiction to former ſettlements.

I applied immediately to counſel—ſtated the caſe—diſplayed my right, and demanded their opinion.——Clear as the ſun, in my favour!——The allegations in the will, falſe and ridiculous——and the ſeizing the eſtate ſo contrary to all law, that a ſuit would ſpeedily be deciſive in my favour. Urged by

ſo

ſo ſtrong motives and ſuch great authority, I determined without heſitation to aſſert my right, and a ſuit was commenced accordingly.

Three tedious years did this law-ſuit laſt with great violence, or in other words, as long as I was able, by all the ſcraping, borrowing, tearing methods, to ſupply my harpies with the annual ſums neceſſary to carry it on. When I could no longer raiſe a penny, and a freſh matter was to be puſhed——my gentry, diſcovering the lowneſs of my purſe, declared I was ruined if I flinch'd, that I muſt proceed, or I ſhould be thrown.—— Every thing was vain; I could have raiſed mountains as ſoon as caſh, and my ſuit and purſe beat time ſo exactly together, that very ſoon after my declaration of my poverty, the final trial came on, and I was worſted. Well knowing how fatally deſtructive ſuch a ſtroke muſt prove, to me, I immediately retired to a cheap and diſtant part of the town, and took a lodging for a week, juſt to gain time to conſider what muſt be my plan.

Never

Never mortal, I believe, was more cruelly perſecuted by fortune than myſelf.——Married young to a woman, the very idol of my ſoul, and living with her for a ſhort time in a ſtate of more than human happineſs, then plung'd at once into ten-fold miſery, and heart-cutting deſpair——involved in debts, and perſecuted with the perpetual dunning of creditors——then ſet free from thoſe mean and degrading ſhackles to an honeſt mind, by the certain inheritance of an eſtate of ſixteen hundred pounds a year——laſtly, deprived of every hope of that noble reſource, and again ſunk into the very abyſs of wretchedneſs, miſery and poverty.

My contemplations of futurity, however, were ſoon interrupted—I was ſmelt out by one of my creditors, a tradeſman, and on the brink of a priſon, when, on repreſenting my miſerable caſe to him, the man had the reaſon and humanity to leave me to myſelf in expectation of my one time or other meeting with better days, and promiſed to

diſcover

diſcover me to no body. I was lucky in this eſcape, which gave me ſpirits, like my other painted vapours, only to render the general darkneſs of my life more terribly black. In three days afterwards I was arreſted by the attorney that had partly managed my ſuit, and thrown into a gaol. I would omit the whole ſcene of wretchedneſs which I here endured, had not ſome ſlight circumſtances happened a little worthy of remembrance. I preſently received a letter from my wife, full of the moſt bitter invectives—the moſt cutting ſneers and raillery—and the moſt diabolical reproaches and contempt—I troubled myſelf ſo little about her, that her letter gave me no other uneaſineſs than reviving in my ſorrow-beaten mind the idea of times once ſo pleaſing. Good Heaven! what a change! I may truly ſay that the afflictions of my preſent ſituation were ſuch as exceeded all hope of remedy. Such a load of grief—ſuch an oppreſſive, griping poverty, bowed down my very ſoul, that but few ideas remained to convince me my mind

was

was once filled with more enlarged conceptions.

Among my brethren in miſery was a middle aged man, who, to all appearance, had been long in the loweſt poverty——yet his countenance was remarkably lively, and his complexion ruddy and wholſome: he ſeldom ſpoke —but ſeem'd perpetually loſt in the deepeſt reverie—Accident had occaſioned a few ſlight paſſing words between us, which ſtruck me greatly from the ſtriking propriety of their import, and the wonderful elegance of his expreſſion. Attracted by circumſtances ſo little expected, I made it my buſineſs to enter into converſation with him the firſt time a tolerable opportunity offered.—This was not eaſily gained; for a man of ſo few words ſpoke none in vain.—There was *an expreſſion* in his phyſiognomy which greatly commanded my attention, ſilent as he was; obſerving him particularly grave, I watched him attentively; but remarked no other ſigns of grief eſcape him than taking from out of his tatter'd pocket a ſmall ſhagreen caſe, which

which he opened and looked at with the utmoſt attention, frequently turning up his eyes to Heaven with a moſt languiſhing aſpect.

"Heavens! Sir," ſaid I, addreſſing him, "is not this place wretched enough, but muſt the unhappineſs of a man of your underſtanding be added to by a woman; for of ſuch I ſuppoſe is that picture?"

"A woman!" replied the ſtranger, "Why art thou ſo little acquainted with the human heart, as not to know, at your years, the power of that ſex! Your ſenſibility or attention muſt have been weak indeed.——

My ſenſibility has been too great for my heart's repoſe—but I had an idea of a firmer mind in you. But before I make that judgment, I ſhould ſee the ſtrength of the temptation. May I beg a look at that picture?

He looked at me with ſome ſurprize—but, however, ſhowed it to me. Good Heaven! what was my amazement to behold my wife—exact as life!——'twas ſhe herſelf——A

ſweet, placid ſmile upon her countenance, which ſeemed angelic to the view—ſuch as once I had known——but now—Oh! my ſoul! no ſuch looks for me!——I ſtarted at the ſight—and rivetting my eyes upon the picture, was motionleſs and ſilent.—— I felt a tear trickle from my eye——I was aſhamed of my weakneſs.

"What do I ſee?" cried the ſtranger,—"You know her."——

Know her!——Juſt Heavens!——

Her divine beauty has made——

Divine!——Call it by ſome other name, I pray you——Her——

Her ten thouſand times *more* than divine beauty——Her——

And pray, Sir, how long may it be ſince her divine beauty made a conqueſt of you?

Some years.

Excuſe the impertinence of a ſtranger's queſtions—but I am ſo fatally concerned, that I cannot avoid theſe enquiries. Was your intimacy with her before ſhe married?

Ah!

Ah! that cruel marriage!

She had encouraged your addreſſes before then?

No—no—I knew nothing of her being married. Her huſband, like a damn'd fool, was gone, Heaven knows where, and left her in the hands of a vile father to turn her to his profit, had not her virtue——

Ha!——What?——Proceed.

Had not her virtue, like the uncreated eſſence of divinity itſelf, withſtood temptation almoſt above the power of woman.

Withſtood it?

Sure I ſpoke plain.

But when ſhe knew herſelf married, how came ſhe to encourage you? How came you in love with her?

Her vile father made a tool of me, as he had done of others—kept me from ſpeaking to his daughter till I was mad with love—gave me the view of her day after day, till I came into all his terms; but when I ſpoke to the dear angel——

Well—what then?

When I firſt breath'd out my ſoul——

She immediately——

Aye; ſhe immediately ſpurn'd me from her——

What!——refuſed your addreſſes?——

With horror.—Talk'd of her ſituation—— and with high words of an ambiguous import, forbid my ever ſeeing her again.

Very ſtrange!

To me, it ſeemed ſo——but I attributed it to maiden baſhfulneſs, and determined not at once to be rejected.

Then you attacked her once more——

I did. But ſhe received me with ten times more ſcorn than before——and would not hear a ſyllable I had to ſay for myſelf—— She appeared more beautiful than ever—— I grew more and more in love with her.

You amaze me!

Amaze you!——Why ſo?

I beg pardon. Proceed.

So much was I in love, ſo deeply ſmitten, that I could not deſiſt: I ſtill returned and named again my paſſion.

She then was overcome?

Oh! no—you know her not.—Honourable as were my deſigns—her purity of ſoul was of ſuch divine original—ſo uncommon in her ſex—ſo worthy of my love—ſhe rejected the very idea of my ſuit—and as it were accidentally named her huſband——

She had never named him then before?

Never. She fully ſuppoſed my deſign was diſhonourable—and had no conception of my not knowing ſhe was married.

How unaccountable was your ignorance!

The ten-fold villainy of her father, who I take to be the moſt diabolical fellow in Europe, occaſioned it—I was thunder-ſtruck on hearing her name her huſband, and retired loaded with ſhame, to vent myſelf on the vile father—It was with ſome difficulty that I kept my hands from him, but the art-

ful, ſpecious dog, knows how to gloſs over the very devil.

Was this the end of your amour?

Would to Heaven it was! No; my breaſt muſt ever carry ſo deep a wound; for ever muſt I regret the miſery of loving to diſtraction another man's wife—and, ſtrange to me, the wife of a man who loves her not!

But how came you by that knowledge?

I was too much in love to forget in one moment the cauſe of my miſery—It was very natural to enquire, if ſo enchanting a creature was the wife of another man, how he could be ſo careleſs of ſuch a treaſure.

And you was informed——

A ſtrange tranſaction was mentioned in a myſterious manner to me, of which I could not at firſt gain a clear idea.——

A ſtrange tranſaction! What can you mean, Sir? You——

Very ſtrange it appeared to me—The vile father, as nearly as I could form any apprehenſion of it, laid a deteſtable ſcheme—

Heavens

Heavens and earth!——What?

You are nearly concerned in this family, ſurely?—The circumſtances I mention make more impreſſion on you than I could wiſh—

Concerned I am—but of that no more, Sir——I beg you will proceed.

There was an officer in the army (as my information ran) of immenſe riches, who taking notice of the daughter, the father fixed his eyes with rapacious attention on him, as a moſt deſirable prey to his avarice: But his daughter's huſband being a ſtrong bar to his project, he laid a plot to gull both officer and huſband. He contrived, by ſeveral unſeen, trifling circumſtances, to render the latter jealous of his wife, and bringing her and the officer often together, managed to raiſe in him a violent paſſion. It may eaſily be ſuppoſed ſuch a man was of moſt debauched principles, which was certainly the caſe, inſomuch that, as my information ran, the lady's father was conſtant procurer to him; even in his own houſe, and at the very time the profligate wretch pretended

ſuch love for his daughter. In one of thoſe ſcenes of iniquity, the ſubtle father, with infinite dexterity, managed that his ſon-in-law ſhould, in one of his jealous fits, catch the officer and a girl, with all poſſible circumſtances, to deceive him into a belief—

Oh! ſay no more! Speak not daggers to my ſoul! Miſerable wretch that I am!—I am that fool—that deluded huſband——Oh!—

Art thou the man?

Yes——I am he——the gull of that vile father——

I am in aſtoniſhment. Have you not diſcovered the deceit yourſelf?

Never. I ſwallowed the whole trick, and in a fury of jealouſy ran that officer you mentioned through the body.

I was going to mention that circumſtance.

But art thou ſure of the truth of this tale?——On recollection, I had moſt manifeſt reaſon for my ſuſpicions——

Too ſure I am of all I've ſaid——and with ſuch art have your enemies laid their ſnares

to

to keep you in ignorance of the real truth, that you have, I doubt not, and will receive proofs ſufficient to continue your deluſion.

Proofs!—I have a letter now in my pocket, which I received from my wife ſince here I've been, full of opprobrious language—and invective ridicule.

Forgery plain enough.

For what purpoſe can ſuch a letter be forged?

Heavens, Sir! you are infatuated yet. You know not the value of ſuch a woman——and treat her accordingly. That villainous officer, full of riches to bribe the father, keeps your wife, I fear——a priſoner——

Heavens! What do you mean?

Mean?——Why it is by no other plan that he can command the enjoyment of her.

I can ſcarce believe this complicated affair ſhould be thus managed, and eſpecially as an intimate friend of mine in a letter I received from him while abroad——

Lord L. you mean——

What

What might you hear of him?

All the circumſtances of the affair are not clear in my memory now, but I remember very well that he was named as an intimate of the officer's, who aſſiſted him in deceiving you. Some particulars were named to me which would bear no doubt.

It is impoſſible I can doubt how miſerably I have been deceived. Oh, Sir! you know not with what exceſs of love I priz'd that peerleſs woman——with what extravagance of ſorrow I have regretted the fatal loſs——until deluded by ſuch vile machinations I gave full credit to all their plots of horror.

Let me congratulate you, Sir, on the virtue of your wife—Aſſure yourſelf that ſhe is untainted in her mind as purity itſelf—take the firſt opportunity to—

Alas! What opportunity to a priſoner, ſhut up from all converſe with mankind, loaded with debts, ruin and deſtruction. How can I regain the poſſeſſion even of a wife dearly loved——but——poiſon to my ſoul!——loſt for ever——

This

This ſtranger, in whom ſomething appeared to merit my eſteem, was releaſed from priſon through the long-delayed generoſity of a relation: his enlargement was a heavy loſs to me, as I converſed with him alone ——and met with a ſadly pleaſing kind of melancholy in the reciprocal communication of our ideas. He left *me* the moſt miſerable of all mankind; bowed down under the intolerable load of cutting ſelf-reproaches—— which drop'd anguiſh like melting lead into my heart's inmoſt receſſes.—I wrote ſeveral letters to old friends, but never received one anſwer—Poverty and priſon can ſcarce be thought of in the world without contamination. I languiſh'd three years in dreadful miſery of mind and body—full of ideas of the happineſs I had loſt; and ſtung to the quick at the thought of my wife's being the prey of lawleſs luſt and violence.

After an age of wretchedneſs, I was one morning meditating on my future lot, and almoſt yielding up my ſoul in the laſt gaſp of miſery,

miſery, when a perſon came into the priſon and called for me by name.——I ſtarted at a ſound ſo new, in any mouth but my jailor's. —Judge how great was my aſtoniſhment, when I was informed that I was free:—my debt diſcharged, and a purſe of twenty guineas put into my hand by the ſtranger, who I looked on as my deliverer; but he undeceived me in that circumſtance, by giving me a direction to a lady to whom I was to pay the tribute of my gratitude; he adviſed me, at the ſame time, to be private in my motions, as he underſtood I had other creditors.

It may eaſily be conceived I walked forth from my dungeon with no ſmall ſatisfaction —it was not, however, unmixed even immediately with ſome alloy——I could not but look with horror on the crouds I paſſed ——and conſider them nearly akin in their natures to beaſts of the moſt ſavage kind, and wanting that ſoftneſs and milk of ſpecies, if I may uſe the expreſſion, which is found in

in the fierceſt inhabitants of the foreſt. Millions of diſquieting fears and anxious ſuſpicions invenom'd my mind, and made me almoſt wiſh myſelf the loweſt of the brute kind, rather than endure the faculty of tormenting myſelf with ſuch wretched ideas as alone crouded into my imagination.

The twenty guineas changed my horrid gaol appearance, by new cloathing me in a decent manner. I went immediately, according to my direction, to pay my reſpects to my benefactreſs, whoſe name was entirely new to me. Her houſe ſeemed large and very handſomely furniſhed——I was ſhown into a dining-room, where I waited ſome time before any one appeared——at laſt enter'd the lady, whoſe face I had ſome ſlight recollection of, but knew not where I had ſeen her.——She ſeemed about eight and twenty or thirty years of age——handſome and genteel, with a countenance agreeable enough. I thanked her for her generoſity in terms no ways backward or cold, nor high-flown and flattering. She gave me to under-

underſtand, that ſhe was related to a perſon at whoſe houſe I once lodged, and enquiring ſlightly concerning me, heard an advantageous character, with mention of ſeveral great misfortunes. That ſoon after ſhe was told I had been thrown in priſon for debts which it was impoſſible I ſhould pay; but having, at that time, no power of *her* own, *(I found ſhe had been married to a rich old fellow, ſince dead)* ſhe could not act according to her will—— However, as it was now in her power, ſhe could not avoid doing that which common humanity required, ſince few caſes could be more remarkably unfortunate than mine. She concluded with deſiring me to ſtay dinner —and the converſation then conſiſted chiefly of her enquiring, and my giving her ſome account of my miſerable life. When ſhe underſtood that I had yet ſeveral creditors who would ſeize the firſt opportunity of arreſting me, ſhe bid me not be unhappy at thoſe circumſtances, ſince ſhe never liked to *do things by halves.* On my taking leave of her, ſhe deſired me to be free, and call on her whenever I had leiſure.——

I could not help thinking ſuch a character very remarkable in ſuch an age——Little did I expect that a perſon unknown ſhould relieve the neceſſities of another in ſo large and generous a ſtile. But different as the ſtate I then was in from that ſo late I had experienced, yet nothing could ſet eaſy on my mind till I had gained certain intelligence of my wife. I was all on fire to return and hurl ten-fold confuſion on my enemy, the Colonel, for daring to take ſuch vile advantage of my misfortunes. I made little doubt of finding the beloved of my ſoul in a ſtate of miſerable confinement; the very thought of it pierc'd me with agony. I poſted into the weſt of England, and as ſoon as I arrived at the well known place, made a few enquiries concerning my wife, the Colonel, and her father—What was again my aſtoniſhment, when I was given to underſtand, by ſeveral who knew me not, that my wife lived in open and moſt impudent adultery with a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Exeter——

that

that the Colonel had done with her; that a gentleman of fortune, at ſome diſtance, had her next; and laſtly, ſhe was then near that city. Greatly ſurprized at theſe dreadful particulars, which confirmed all my firſt hatred——but ſet my ſcarce healed wounds bleeding afreſh; I repeated my enquiries among many different people, and all agreed in the ſame curſed ſtory. Convinc'd of all my former ſorrow, I left the country, determining never more to behold a ſcene, the witneſs of ſo much happineſs, and then of ſo much miſery.

On my arrival in London, I waited on my friend, the widow, who expreſſed great pleaſure at my return; adviſed me to forget a wife every way ſo unworthy of me—ſeemed much pleaſed with my company, and before I left her, gave me a ſmall bundle of papers ——which when I opened, I found to contain receipts in full from all my creditors, and a bank note of five hundred pounds. Surprized at ſuch overflowing bounty, I flew

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to her houſe, and returned my heartieſt acknowledgments for ſuch abundant favours ——She waved the ſubject, paid ſeveral compliments to my character, and entering into a general converſation, diſplayed an agreeable livelineſs and good ſenſe, which threw her into a very conſpicuous light; we parted highly pleaſed with each other; I began to forget my ſorrow, and thought eaſe at leaſt grown friends with me.

On my next viſit, ſhe told me, ſhe thought my lodgings not convenient nor becoming a man, the true owner of ſo handſome an eſtate, and which ſhe purpoſed putting me in poſſeſſion of, if law and reaſon ever went together—that ſhe had a pretty houſe in her ſtreet, which ſhe would lett me—ſhe loved being regular in any affairs of that kind, and as I might really know the houſe to be mine during the term, ſhe deſigned ordering her attorney to draw up a leaſe accordingly —adding, "I ſhall not be hard with you, Sir, as to rent."——Soon after, the leaſe

was executed, and I took poſſeſſion of a pretty houſe, which was very elegantly furniſhed for me. All the return I could make for benefits ſhowered down on me with ſo generous and unſparing a hand, was to render myſelf as agreeable to my benefactreſs as I could: I entertained her with what converſation I was maſter of, and gratitude induced me to give her what entertainment was in my power. I aimed at this with the greater pleaſure, as I ſaw plainly the goodneſs and generoſity of her mind prompted all her actions.

I one day received a viſit from my lodging-houſe friend, the relation of my benefactreſs. He apologized for paying me a viſit—but ſaid he came to give me a little advice. I was ſomewhat ſurprized at his introduction, but deſired him to proceed.——

I find, ſaid he, you are at preſent in high favour with my couſin—and from all the enquiries I have made, I find your character a good one, and that you was born a gentle-

man: I am therefore in your intereſt, and as my couſin has a noble fortune, ſhe is and will be followed enough; but I am for having her ſafe lodged in the hands of a man of honour.

I had a mind to hear all his ideas—and therefore let him proceed without interruption——

As this is my opinion, and my couſin, I doubt not, apt to be conſtant in her likings, I would adviſe you to ſtrike while the iron is hot—you underſtand me, Sir—And if you do not ſucceed, which I can ſcarcely think, do not place too much dependance in her generoſity: I mean in a continuance of it—— In her conſtancy——

You do not ſeem to be acquainted, Mr.—— with one circumſtance—that I have a wife.

A wife!

Even ſo.

I am very ſorry to hear it. I like not my couſin's conduct. Let me perſuade you to be

on your guard—I am afraid her favours to you are not given with generoſity for their only motives.

I gave but little ear to ſuſpicions ſo very injurious to his relation's honour, and ſo poorly grounded——But I thanked him for his advice, and ſo we parted; I repairing to my friendly widow, and he to his home. She received me as ſhe ever did, with great politeneſs and ſatisfaction at my company—her attention to me made me think of her couſin's ſuſpicions, and a little flattered my vanity. Ridiculous folly! I thought the good opinion of a woman ſo agreeable, and not without perſonal charms, was not to be ſlighted. The point of being well with the ſex was of early importance to me, and my apprenticeſhip to arms did not leſſen it. By degrees I imperceptibly glided into a complaiſance more than common; and a habit of ſpending much of my time with her. She did not appear unmindful of theſe circumſtances, but treated me with a degree of

kindneſs

kindneſs and friendſhip not a little pleaſing. I ſhall not ſwell this narrative with a multitude of unintereſting particulars——It is ſufficient to add here, that by degrees, politeneſs brought on a warm friendſhip between us, which inſenſibly melted into ſomething like Love. Conſtant opportunity made us indulge ſuch pleaſing ſenſations, which, ere long, grew too ſtrong to be maſtered; and in fine, hurried us into a guilty life, which, notwithſtanding the enjoyment it conferred, did not repay me for the ſtate of mind it deſtroyed.

Such was the ſcene for a few months; but nothing in this world has permanency for its foundation: I perceived a kind of coldneſs in her behaviour, which ſtruck me the more, having before experienced it——I was all attention to her conduct, and preſently ſaw, with clearneſs enough to convince, that ſhe no longer loved me. In this ſituation, trifles light as air lay open the very inmoſt ſoul—I ſaw the conſequence to me—and

when it was too late, diſcovered the character of the woman. Variety of diſappointments ought to have given me more penetration. It is needleſs to mark the progreſs of that diſguſt which took place in her mind, and which is ſo often the follower of ſatiety—— It was not long before an open quarrel became unavoidable, and much as I expected that, little did I look for what enſued.

I left her abruptly, but ſoon received a viſit from her attorney, demanding, under various heads, the ſum of thirteen hundred pounds, a debt, which he informed me, leſt I ſhould be ignorant of it, I owed to my lovely widow. The impudence of the attack was ſo great, that it was with no ſmall difficulty I kept my cane from the back of the pettifogger—but he repeated his demand, and as a proof of its reality, put into my hands a copy of the leaſe, by virtue of which I enjoyed my houſe: I read it immediately, and great was my aſtoniſhment to find a ſcene of villainy even to me incredible; I had ſign'd away to my vile benefac-

treſs

treſs every ſixpence I had received from her, in ſuch an abſolute, binding manner, that it was too plain I was her ſlave. I told her attorney, I would go immediately and make her agree to burn ſo infamous a contract. He ſaid he would accompany me. I was not fool enough to expect any ſuch matter, but I could not debar myſelf the ſatisfaction of paying her off in words for her meanneſs. Away I walked—but before I got to the end of the ſtreet I was arreſted, under the attorney's orders, by his myrmidons ready laid for the purpoſe, and loaded with his ſarcaſms, and in half an hour's time was again buried in that priſon I had ſo lately left.

This ſtroke of cruel fortune threw me into a ſtupor of miſery and deſpair. A philoſophical turn of mind—a diſpoſition full of religious meditation, or a ſtoical ſtubbornneſs of ſoul, might have enabled me to bear up with courage and reſolution againſt the influence of contraſts, however cutting, and the attacks of a deſtiny however ſevere: But ſo actively

miſerable had my life been, that but little of it had I employed in learning that great and neceſſary art, *to think*. My ideas were thoſe which aroſe immediately from experience, and of courſe horribly tinctured with every variation of the moſt exquiſite diſtreſs. A miſanthropy extremely natural took poſſeſſion of my ſoul.—I could not help attributing the *vices* of the ſpecies to their *nature*; and ſo extenſive had been my ſcale of ill treatment, ſo peculiarly unhappy every connection I formed, that I adopted notions of general villainy conſonant to the portion I had met with myſelf. I ought, beyond all doubt, to have reflected that many, if not all my misfortunes were originally owing to my own imprudence, and that a better founded idea of true religion would have ſecured me from the effect of temptations to which I eaſily ſubmitted. Theſe are after-reflections which I find of great weight, when no enemy is at hand to make the aſſault—but ſuch unremitting vigour in the great buſineſs of miſery

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and ruin, is prevalent in the world, that reflection gives way to the ſtronger allurements of ſenſual objects.—In retirement, reflection glorioufly reigns——in the world fancy and inclination as imperioufly triumphs.

I languiſhed three years in my ſecond impriſonment, a period of exquiſite miſery both of mind and body: The death of my vile perſecutor was the occaſion of my liberty—her executor had not the ſame motive for prolonging my wretchedneſs. I walk'd forth a ſpectre, and hunger threw me into the neceſſity of labouring for my bread: but the ſcenes of ſhocking crimes with which my poverty rendered me acquainted, gave me ſuch a loathing of the town, that I quitted it for the country—and ſubſiſted on bread alone, until I found myſelf at no inconſiderable diſtance from the metropolis: I applied earneſtly for work, but was anſwered with nothing but threats of conſtables—houſes of correction, and whipping-poſts; I was told of being a vagrant in terms of horror, and on

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the poor ſubſiſtence of a few halfpence, thrown at me with eyes of ſcorn, wandered many days before I could find the leaſt employment.

Accident at laſt threw me on a farmer in want of labourers, who agreed at once to give me twelve-pence a day. Heaven be praiſed, he was a mild, humane man, who had patience with my unſkilfulneſs——and treated me with a moderation I had never before experienced. At firſt I lodged at a neighbouring alehouſe, but my maſter afterwards fixed me in a little, neat cottage, which he lett off from his farm. A change of air ſo greatly for the better, by degrees brought me to my health and ſtrength, and even labour grew tolerable: I made up in aſſiduity and perſeverance what I wanted in ſtrength and ſkill; and had the ſatisfaction to find my maſter pleaſed with me. I was of uſe to him on ſome occaſions wherein reading and writing were neceſſary, qualifications he wanted; and being willing his children ſhould enjoy them, he agreed to give me a ſmall

matter

matter for teaching them after work; a propoſal I readily came into, as I was very ambitious of being able to buy a little furniture more convenient and agreeable than what I was forced to hire. I accompliſhed this by degrees, and found great pleaſure in adorning my humble cottage. As ſoon as I was tolerable at the different kinds of work I did, I took every thing of the farmer by the job, and working earlier than common, and with great induſtry, I found my earnings more than ſufficient to maintain me and pay my rent—the overplus was all expended on my little home. This cottage I conſidered as a ſecure harbour, after a voyage on a moſt boiſterous ſea. It was ſituated by the ſide of a road, with a pretty piece of land around it, which I made into a kitchen garden, and afterwards half lived out of it. I clipt the hedge around it, planted ſome trees on each ſide the houſe, and preſently diſtinguiſhed the cottage I lived in from any of the neighbouring ones: My furniture was alſo entirely

in

in another ſtile—Some things in the carpentry way I made myſelf, and others I bought, which greatly added to the conveniencies of my life; and found that half the money which moſt labourers ſpent at the alehouſe, ſufficient to enable me to compaſs ſeveral enjoyments of which they could have no idea. A Milton was the only book I afforded myſelf. There were, however, ſeveral little acquiſitions which my purſe would by no means reach, and which I could not help wiſhing for; and often reflected in what manner I could make a ſmall addition to my fortune—But no other means ſtriking me than common labour, I was forced to give over all fruitleſs wiſhes—I determined, however, to write to my friend the lodging-man, requeſting him, in caſe of any trifle happening that concerned me, to give me a line.—In about a month, I received a letter from him, informing me, that my wife was dead—which, as he juſtly obſerved, could be no diſagreeable event to me.

Habit

Habit rendered my new life perfectly agreeable to me, and I found the large ſhare of health I enjoyed, contributed not a little to the eaſing my mind, and giving it a ſerenity I had ſcarce ever before experienced. Thus potently convinced of the value of the way of life I led, I wiſh'd for no other; and thought it highly probable that I might end my days in peace and infinitely to be deſired obſcurity.

The honeſt farmer that had hitherto employed me, having a couple of months leiſure time, in which he ſhould have no occaſion for my labour, adviſed me to enquire for my work at the Hall, for the 'Squire wanted ſeveral hands in his gardens. I followed his advice, in expectation of earning more, though I had no great reliſh for working under a man of ſo hot, fiery, and abſurd a temper as this 'Squire H. who was a man, in every reſpect, of a character I utterly diſliked. —However, conceiving that I ſhould have more to do with his gardener than himſelf,

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and expecting to have more than common wages, I e'en determined to try the two months, as the farmer promiſed to take me again, if I did not like to continue with Mr. H——. I accordingly determined on the change—and was immediately accepted, and ſet about ſeveral little offices in the gardens.

This Mr. H. I found, notwithſtanding his great eſtate, looked ſo minutely into every thing, that not even a new labourer could come without his queſtioning him—and I among the reſt—This officiouſneſs was owing to his ſuſpicion, his avarice, and a moſt coxcomical idea, that no trivial thing could be done well, without his having ſome hand in the management. This part of his character, I was preſently informed, extended to every department among his ſervants—— He was the verieſt fribble in the nurſery that can be imagined—and in every thing elſe the moſt conceited fop; and what was of worſe conſequence to thoſe around him—the moſt deteſtable tyrant to his wife, children and ſervants, I ever heard of. It was reported among

among the ſervants, that he had proceeded to horrible extremities even with his daughters in the fury of his paſſions, eſpecially one who was no favourite—it was ſaid he had horſe-whipped her—incredible with many—but ſuch variety of villainy had I met with in the world, that I had no difficulty in believing it. This wretch, whoſe complicated ill humours were not a little added to by the gout, gave orders for a ſwelling lawn, which roſe to a temple, to be altered, and the wave of it changed, ſo as to let in a ſlight view of a lake at a little diſtance—his gardener did not comprehend his meaning—the maſter's paſſion was ſuch, that after much fury and altercation, he diſcharged him. The under-gardener had his place, and diſpleaſed the maſter as much as the firſt; he ordered him out of his ſight, and fixed on me by accident to execute his ideas—I pleaſed him at once, and that circumſtance made me a violent favourite, *in his manner*; and he afterwards fixed on me for ſeveral of his ſchemes. I often executed his plans entirely to his mind,

and

and ſhortly gained an advance of wages for my ſkill.

It was ſoon after this promotion, that I was one day accidentally laid on an agreeable bank in a grove, at ſome diſtance from the houſe, where I knew there was no danger of my maſter's coming, with a Milton in my hand. I read out that ſweet ſpeech in Comus,

'Can any mortal mixture,' &c.

and when I had finiſhed it, hearing a noiſe, I looked behind me, and ſaw a young lady, a moſt elegant and agreeable figure, in an attitude of attention cloſe to me. I roſe up, and bowing, was moving off.

Pray, gardener, ſaid ſhe, are not you the labourer my father took lately for the levelling?

Yes, Madam.

Bleſs me! How come you by Milton? What do you generally read poetry?

Milton is the only book I poſſeſs, Madam.

Why you read very well for a common labourer: How came you to be ſo well educated?

Only

Only through the goodneſs of my parents.

Prithee turn to the poem entitled L'Allegro, and read it to me.

I did as ſhe directed me.

Is it by accident that you have only Milton —or do you like poetry alone?

I have ſo little time for reading, Madam, that poetry pleaſes me infinitely the beſt—ſince in the ſame extent of lines a much greater variety of thought is expreſſed, and that by far more forcibly than is ever met with in the beſt proſe—and verſification acting ſo powerfully on the memory, is a great inducement with me to prefer it.

But why is Milton your only poet?

I cannot afford many books, Madam, and a very few contain all the poetry that I think worth being ſolicitous after.

You are very nice, methinks.

That is of no bad conſequence, Madam, to me, who cannot peruſe variety, and therefore, I am perſuaded, have the more pleaſure in what I do read.

Who is your next favourite poet?

Shakeſpear equally poſſeſſes my good opinion, but ſo many volumes were above my purſe.

She took leave of me with a complaiſance above what is ever paid to any in my ſtation from one of ſo ſuperior rank; but I perceived in her manner, a perfect aſtoniſhment at what ſhe ſaw in me. The adventure was very agreeable to me—for I never beheld a ſweeter or more amiable countenance in my days—a more pleaſing beauty—or more winning grace. I was perfectly charmed at the firſt ſight—and every agreeable idea I had ever entertained of the ſex, ruſh'd into my mind at once.

In a day or two afterwards, near the ſame place, I was met by the ſame lady, accompanied by another, one of her ſiſters: ſhe called to me, and with great ſweetneſs in her manner, made me a preſent of Shakeſpear's works tied up in a white handkerchief. I returned my thanks as politely as I was able, and not much in the labourer's ſtile. She then added,

—"Here's my ſiſter has a mind to hear you read ſome of Milton; but we have no time now—if you could be at the root-houſe next Thurſday afternoon, about four o'clock, we will be there; and do you hear, have your Milton with you."—

The appointment was too agreeable to me to let it ſlip my memory—I was preciſe to the time, and in about a quarter of an hour came the ladies.

"Gardener," ſaid the firſt I had ſeen, who was the handſomeſt and moſt agreeable, —"You muſt be careful not to let my father ſee you reading—He has an averſion to books in general, and would be quite in a fury to ſee any of his people reading.

I ſhould be ſorry, Madam, to offend a perſon ſo eaſily offended.

Eaſily offended, indeed! Take care of yourſelf; for if a man will treat his children like a tyrant, his ſervants have little to hope.

I hope I ſhall never be ſo unhappy as to hear that he treats either of you, ladies, ill.

Moſt tyrannically ſo only laſt night, inſomuch, that we are almoſt in fear of our lives.

Juſt Heaven! That a man in his ſtation and ample fortune ſhould be ſo entirely wanting in the humanity of a man—and the manners of a gentleman! Ladies, my heart bleeds for your ſufferings!

Mr. Gardener, ſaid the other, methinks your language is much above that of a labourer. And my ſiſter tells me you read remarkably well—Will you favour me with a few lines from Milton?

I read part of the deſcription of Paradiſe:—They liſtened to me with great attention, and ſeemed much pleaſed. We converſed about half an hour on different topics, in which I diſplayed all the ſprightlineſs and compliment I was maſter of, without affectation, and I parted deep in their good graces.—Two days after, as I was planting ſome ſhrubs, I was ſurprized to ſee the elder one (her I firſt ſaw) advancing towards me with a parcel in her hand.

Mr.

Mr. Holmes, ſaid ſhe, (that was the name I paſſed under) I muſt beg your acceptance of theſe books—A ſet of Spencer's works.

Your kindneſs, Madam, is——

I do not expect any compliments in return, but I want your advice in a point of great importance.

You do me great honour——

My father's cruelty to me really grows ſo intolerable, that I can bear it no longer—but how to remedy myſelf I know not. Give me your advice.

You certainly could not be in a more critical ſituation. But in what manner have you an idea, Madam, of remedying yourſelf?

In any manner that gets me out of his clutches.

Some relation in your eye, to whom you think of flying?

Alas! I know of none that would receive me.

Your caſe is truly worthy of pity. Would to Heaven I had it in my power at leaſt to alleviate your miſery.

I am certain, Sir, that you are of an education and turn of ſentiment greatly ſuperior to your preſent ſtation—I do not ſcruple, therefore, opening my wretchedneſs to you as the only friend to whom I dare intruſt the leaſt deſign of eaſing myſelf. Let me deſire you, therefore, to conſider a little for me, and give me your advice the next time I ſee you.

I perſued the converſation with her, and ſliding into a familiar ſtrain, found her exceeding ſenſible, of a ſteady judgment, and moſt agreeable manners. I ſympathized with her on her unhappineſs, and owned that in miſery I was the companion of any one.—She liſtened to me with great attention, and by degrees brought me to confeſs that I was not born to my preſent ſtation, but to one greatly ſuperior. She expreſſed a great deſire to hear my ſtory, which I promiſed her at a more convenient time.

It was impoſſible that I ſhould converſe ſo much with this woman, and not love her—Spite of all the prudential reſolutions which I thought had been engraven in my ſoul, I fell

fell at once into the ſoft paſſion, and this meeting left me deeply enamoured with this agreeable creature: nor had I any reaſon to doubt but that ſhe had at leaſt a very good opinion of me. Two ſucceeding meetings were very ſilent, ſighing and tender—The words, *I love you*, quiver'd on my lips, but I durſt not pronounce them. The third, I told her my tale, leaving out but few circumſtances—She mingled her tears with mine—and when I had concluded, I ventured to ſpeak to her in broken accents of the then ſtate of my mind.—She heard me with bluſhing confuſion. Good Heaven! how beautifully amiable was ſhe in that moment? She continued ſilent.—Taking hold of her hand, and preſſing it to my lips,

For Heaven's ſake, Madam, pronounce my fate. Speak but one cruel word, and I am miſerable for ever.

I would not have you miſerable. Read in my ſilence what I am aſhamed to utter—

I preſs'd her not to leave me in wretched ſuſpence, and our meeting ended in mutual

aſſurances of eternal love and fidelity. Never till that moment did I know what love was; I had miſtaken other affections and fopperies for that delicious paſſion—but my heart had long been ſpared, only to be bound in ſtronger chains at laſt.

Following meetings were paſſed in all the enchanting tenderneſs of unaffected love—Never were moments of purer enjoyment. It was extremely natural in us to concert the means of continuing our happineſs: and after a thouſand ſchemes, none appeared ſo eligible as to remove from that neighbourhood as ſoon as poſſible: but no plan of that nature could come from me without firſt propoſing marriage, as highly neceſſary before it was executed. The amiable creature aſſured me before ſhe agreed to it, that I was to expect no fortune—no advancement from ſuch a meaſure.——I rejected all ſuch ideas, and the plan was determined. We were privately married at a neighbouring church. My wife's whole fortune was a few jewels, her cloaths, &c. and thirty guineas in caſh. I conveyed her to my cottage one night, and having

having before ſold my moveables, the next morning we ſet off by break of day on the outſide of a machine for London; where we arrived ſafe, without hearing any news of purſuers. I went to my old friend the lodging-man, who, with great good nature and humanity, inſiſted on our being his gueſts a fortnight; which time we accordingly ſtaid with him; and then taking the conveniency of a machine, went down into Northamptonſhire, and was obliged to live at an inn in a town ſome time before I could, by traverſing a number of villages in the neighbourhood, find out a little cottage to hire; intending to purchaſe one as ſoon as an opportunity offered. At laſt I happened on a very tolerable one, and at a reaſonable rent. We fixed directly in it; and I preſently found employment as a labourer.

Heaven bleſſed me with health to maintain myſelf and my wife, without breaking into our little fortune: and I found every day freſh ſubject of love and admiration in the humility, chearfulneſs, and unaffected native ſimplicity of my wife, whoſe diſpoſition was

the

the moſt angelic imagination can conceive. Never once did I know her complain of a change of fortune—never regretted the plenty ſhe had left. Her little home was ever agreeable to her—and her company rendered it a paradiſe to me.

Five years paſſed in this humble, but happy and contented life. In that time my wife brought me a fine boy, which was, however, ſnatched away when only a year old, to our no ſlight grief. We ſhould have continued ſo happily ſituated, had I not received a letter from my friend at London, informing me, that one of my ſiſters was dead, and had left me ſeven thouſand pounds. This news hurried us to London: The money was left in ſeveral legacies, and ſome diſputes in law enſued among the executors. I ſtood neuter, but received in two years, after a life of anxiety and trouble, one of the legacies of five hundred pounds; in three years more another of two thouſand—in ſhort, it was ſeven years before the whole was paid. A period full of law, terror, and fear of literal want. A thouſand times did we repent the leaving our humble cot, and accept-

accepting our right in a country where right muſt be purchaſed by law. At laſt, after ſuch a world of trouble and affliction, we found ourſelves poſſeſſed of four thouſand pounds clear. With that ſum we determined to retire to ſome almoſt uninhabited ſpot, entirely out of the knowledge and reach of friends and enemies—leſt another legacy, or ſome ſuch tempation left through compunction of conſcience, ſhould induce us once more to leave retirement for a world ſo unhappy to us. My wife, through temper as well as reaſon, was much inclined to ſuch a ſcheme. She had too good a fund within herſelf to regret the world or any of its ſeducing attractions; but expreſſed herſelf with great chearfulneſs and pleaſure on the plan.

In the midſt of our little preparations, my wife was brought to bed of a daughter: an event which gave us both the greateſt pleaſure imaginable—but in a ſhort time, dreadfully was it damped to me——Oh! cruel, cutting ſtroke!—by the loſs of the moſt valuable woman in the univerſe. An indiſcreet management after her lying-in gave her cold, which

which brought on a ſever, and ended in her death; leaving me the moſt miſerable, diſconſolate wretch humanity can diſplay. I paſs over the exceſs of my grief, which laſts in all its livelineſs to this hour. My country, and the face of every ſoul I ſaw, was odious to me——I determined to leave for ever the ſcene of ſo much miſery. In a fortnight's time my four thouſand pounds was lodged in the hands of a banker to be remitted directly to Philadelphia, and myſelf and little infant on board a ſhip bound for the ſame place. I remained in that city no longer than was ſufficient for an excurſion into the back country among the Indians—I cultivated an intimacy with ſeveral of their chiefs—and imparting my deſign to reſide near them, they received it with pleaſure; I gave them my idea of the ſpot I ſhould like, and they recommended this beautiful one to me——I returned in haſte to Philadelphia, and laid out great part of my fortune in a houſe, &c. and the moſt uſeful furniture, implements of agriculture, and ſome other things I thought would be of uſe to the Indians, reſerving

juſt

juſt enough to pay the expences of the freight and carriage of the whole, to a paſs, where ſome Indians were ready to receive them, and tranſported the whole to the deſtined ſpot. I had great objections to let any artiſts from our ſettlements attend me, as I wiſh'd to have my retirement a ſecret. My new friends framed my houſe with great dexterity, and did me every other office of friendſhip I could wiſh, until I was entirely fixed with my dear little Emmera in this ſequeſter'd vale of innocence and unworldly pleaſure.

Oh! my Emmera! when theſe papers come to be read by you, mark the picture of the world! Compare it with what you have experienced here—and decide upon your future conduct! Live, my deareſt daughter, contented with peace, ſerenity of mind, and health of body.—Regret not the miſerable vanities of a wretched world—The Indians adore you—never will you have an idea of want here—But change the proſpect, and a whole deluge of evils ruſh at once upon you—If accident diſcovers you to an European, the

the Indians will nobly defend you, if attacked —but what is more dangerous, if attempted to be ſeduced to the world, give not ear to the poiſonous advice, however proſtituted by the arts of ſophiſtry, or varniſh'd by the deluſions of flattery.

May Heaven protect and defend your innocence! Adieu, my Emmera!

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Well, Mr. Chetwyn, what is your opinion of my dear father's Narrative?

That he was the moſt unfortunate man I ever heard of.

Can you now wonder at his renouncing ſo wretched a world? Oh! never—never more, Mr. Chetwyn, even in idea, propoſe to me to leave this retirement——

My faireſt Emmera, fear me not. We enjoy the innocent and moſt agreeable pleaſures of this ſweet ſolitude, and what beſides the happineſs of living perpetually with you can you imagine ſhould influence me?

Heaven knows, Mr. Chetwyn, that I wiſh for no further happineſs than a continuance of

of the preſent life I lead with you—A change to the world could contribute to nothing but my miſery.

But, my deareſt Emmera!—You mean not literally what you ſay——you ſurely do not deſign *always* to——

Talk not of a removal, however diſtant, for——

Miſunderſtand me not—no further than as—

As what?

I would not offend the delicacy of your ſoul for worlds. But——

How ſtrange this is!—You cannot live in retirement—your head is full of the world—Alas! that I ſhould find my father's words ſo true——

You wrong me infinitely—By Heavens you do!—Were we in the midſt of the world—could I but once call you mine; this ſpot of all others would I fix for our only reſidence—

Come, my friend, let us be gone: It will ſoon be evening; I would not have this ſacred hermitage a witneſs to words I wiſh not to hear.

Would to Heaven! my Emmera—you ſaw my heart!

She

She walked off, or I ſhould have puſhed the point further. But I never begin it without confuſion and a ſtrange perplexity of mind which throws impediments in every word: I am happy as I could wiſh, ſave this one circumſtance. But why ſhould I not enjoy all this ſerenity and eaſe with the addition of this faireſt and moſt amiable of her ſex? Why ſhould we not for ever be united by the tendereſt ties? Where can be the offence to the moſt virgin modeſty in ſuch a ſcheme? Juſt Heaven! how tranſcendently happy ſhould I be, ſo ſituated in this delicious reſidence! The world! fare it well——Never ſhould I regret the loſs of any of its enjoyments, ſo exchanged for a life of as much happineſs as this world can in appearance confer.

This letter is ſpun out to a moſt intolerable length——I muſt, therefore, wind it up by aſſuring you how much I am, &c.

P. CHETWYN.

BRITISH 7 DE 71 MUSEUM

END of the FIRST VOLUME.